



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

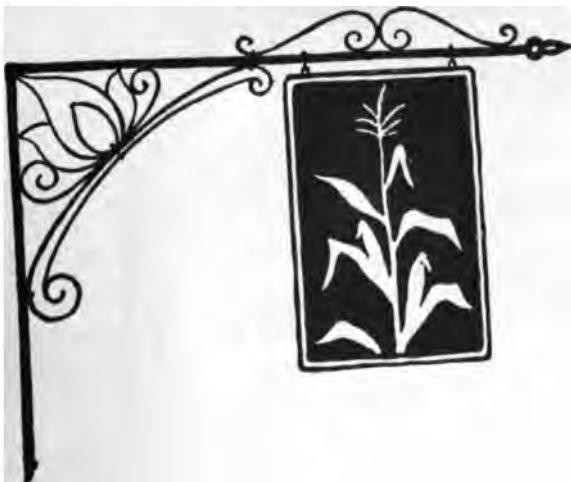
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

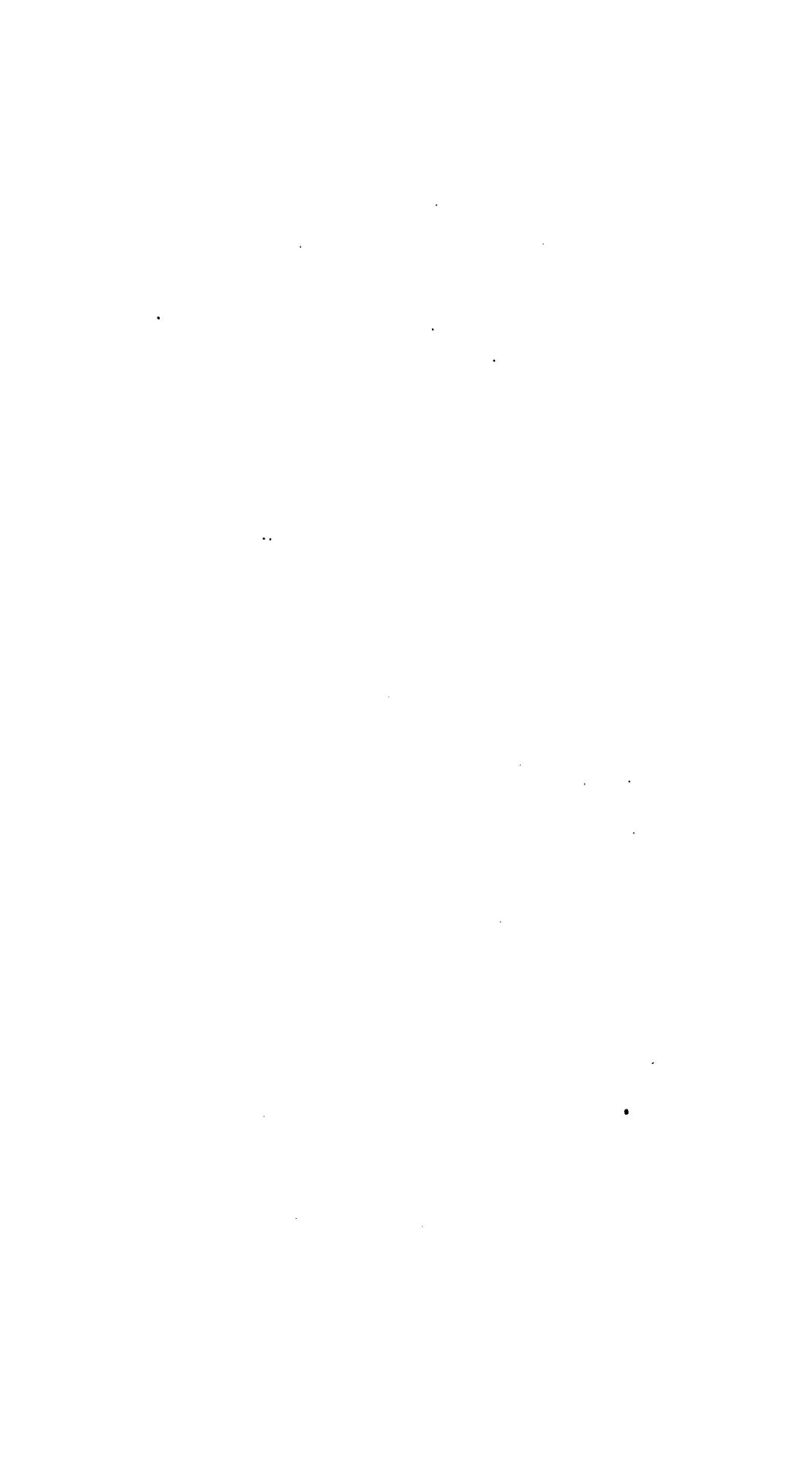
AMERICAN
WAYS & BYWAYS

THE
PACIFIC
COAST

WIFTON JOHNSON







**HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF
THE PACIFIC COAST**

This One



5R118-F47-Q6L3





Fig. 1. - *Orchard*.

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS
OF THE
PACIFIC COAST



WRITTEN AND
ILLUSTRATED BY
CLIFTON JOHNSON

Published by THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

New York MCMVIII

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

*Copyright, 1908,
by the Macmillan Company.*

Set up and electrotyped.
Published April, 1908.

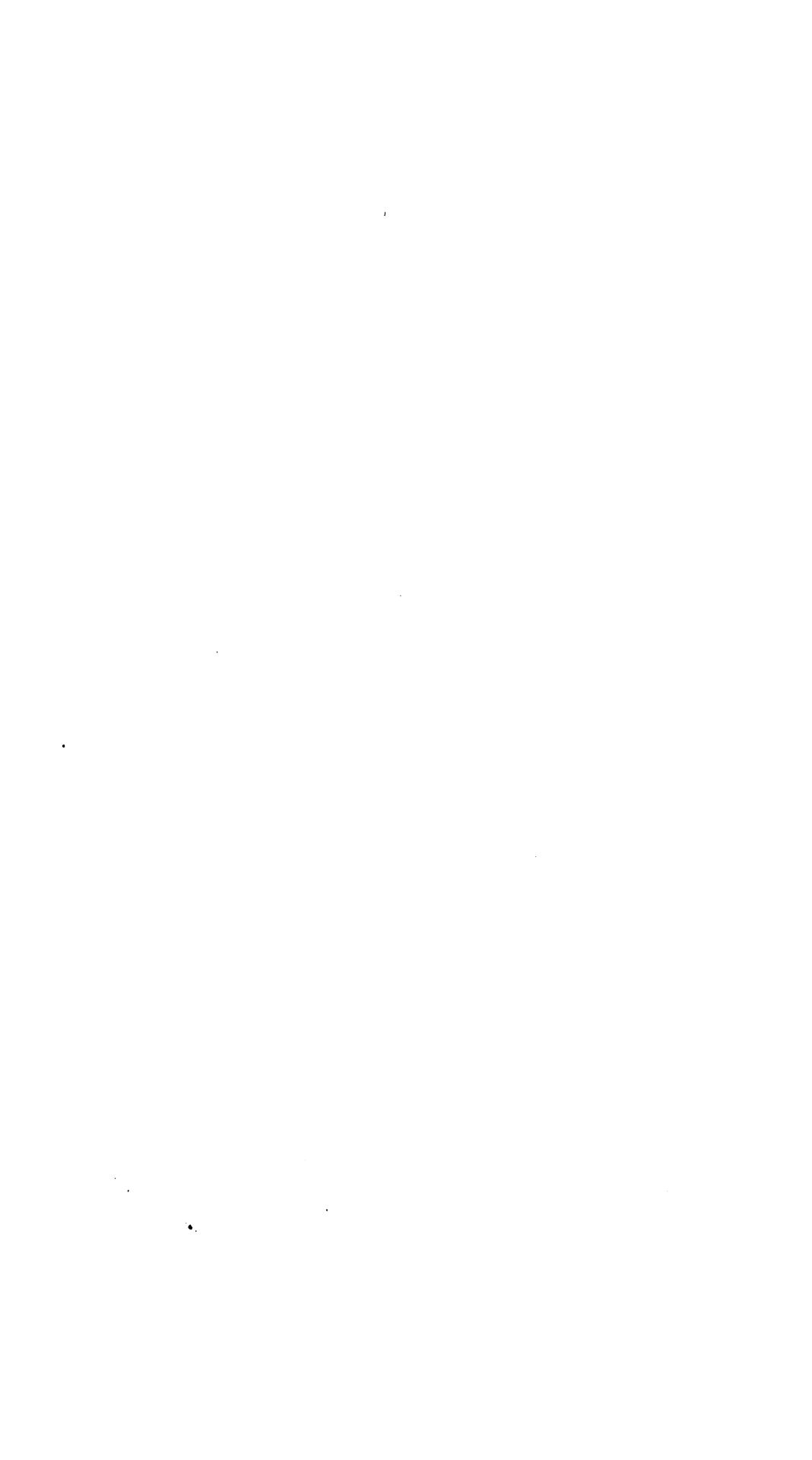
AMERICAN
HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

THE PACIFIC COAST

*Electrotypes
and
Printed
by the
F. A. Bassett Company
Springfield, Mass.*

Contents

	Page
I. The Grand Canyon of Arizona	1
II. On the Borders of Mexico	30
III. A Rustic Village	52
IV. Spring in Southern California	79
V. Santa Barbara and its Historic Mission	106
VI. A Vale of Plenty	124
VII. April in the Yosemite	143
VIII. Around the Golden Gate	166
IX. A Nevada Town with a Past	182
X. Among the Shasta Foothills	209
XI. Oregon Farm Life	228
XII. Along the Columbia	243
XIII. On the Shores of Puget Sound	265
XIV. At the Edge of Canada	286
XV. The Niagara of the West	300



Illustrations

	<i>Frontispiece</i> <i>FACING PAGE</i>
At the Fountain—Santa Barbara	1
The Grand Canyon of Arizona	5
A Guide on the Bright Angel Trail	11
Descending the Corkscrew	14
In the Depths of the Canyon	23
Indian Blanket Weaving	34
Early Spring	37
The Launching of the Ship	41
Crossing at a Ford	48
A Mexican	52
The Story Book	54
Among the Arches of the Old Mission	67
An Indian Family	74
On the Porch at the Village Store	79
The Vineclad Verandah of an Old Spanish Home	85
The Cliffs of Santa Catalina	86
Comrades	99
Schoolgirls	100
Enroute for Death Valley	ix

Illustrations

	FACING PAGE
Garden Work	106
Meditation	111
The Artist	116
At Work in a Home Yard	120
The News	129
Water for Irrigation	133
At Work Along an Irrigating Ditch	135
A Prospector and His Outfit	138
The Road to the Mountains	143
The Valley of the Yosemite	146
The Yosemite Falls	151
The Grizzly Giant	162
Looking from the Fishermen's Wharf towards the Golden Gate	166
A Glimpse of the Shipping	171
A Main Thoroughfare in Chinatown	174
The View across San Francisco Bay to Mt. Tamalpais	179
A Prospector	187
The Tinker	190
Making Firewood of the Sagebrush	196
A Deserted Wigwam	200
The White Peaks of Mt. Shasta	209
The Well at the Back Door	213
Hoboes Getting Dinner	216

Illustrations

xi

	FACING PAGE
Washing Day	225
At the Gate	231
The Milkmaids	235
Schoolboys	238
A Hollow Among the Hills	242
Mending a Salmon Net	244
A Salmon Wheel	251
Woodland Blossoms	254
In a Village on the Columbia	261
Mending a Shoe	266
Starting to Fell a Giant Cedar	271
In the Garden	277
Burning Brush	280
Getting Ready to Plant Potatoes	289
Visiting at the Gate	292
A Corduroy Bridge	294
A Log House	298
Planting Time	303
A Jack Rabbit in Sight	307
The Niagara of the West	312
The Ferry Above the Falls	321

Introductory Note

The several volumes in this series have as a rule very little to say of the large towns. Country life is their chief topic, especially the typical and the picturesque. To the traveller, no life is more interesting, and yet there is none with which it is so difficult to get into close and unconventional contact. Ordinarily, we catch only casual glimpses. For this reason I have wandered much on rural byways and lodged most of the time at village hotels or in rustic homes. My trips have taken me to many characteristic and famous regions; but always in both text and pictures I have tried to show actual life and nature and to convey some of the pleasure I experienced in my intimate acquaintance with the people.

These "Highways and Byways" volumes are often consulted by persons who are planning pleasure tours. To make the books more helpful for this purpose each chapter has a note appended containing suggestions for intending travellers. With the aid of these notes, I think the reader can readily decide what regions are likely to prove particularly worth visiting, and will know how to see such regions with the most comfort and facility.

CLIFTON JOHNSON.

HADLEY, MASS.

The Grand Canyon of Arizona



Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

I

THE GRAND CANYON OF ARIZONA

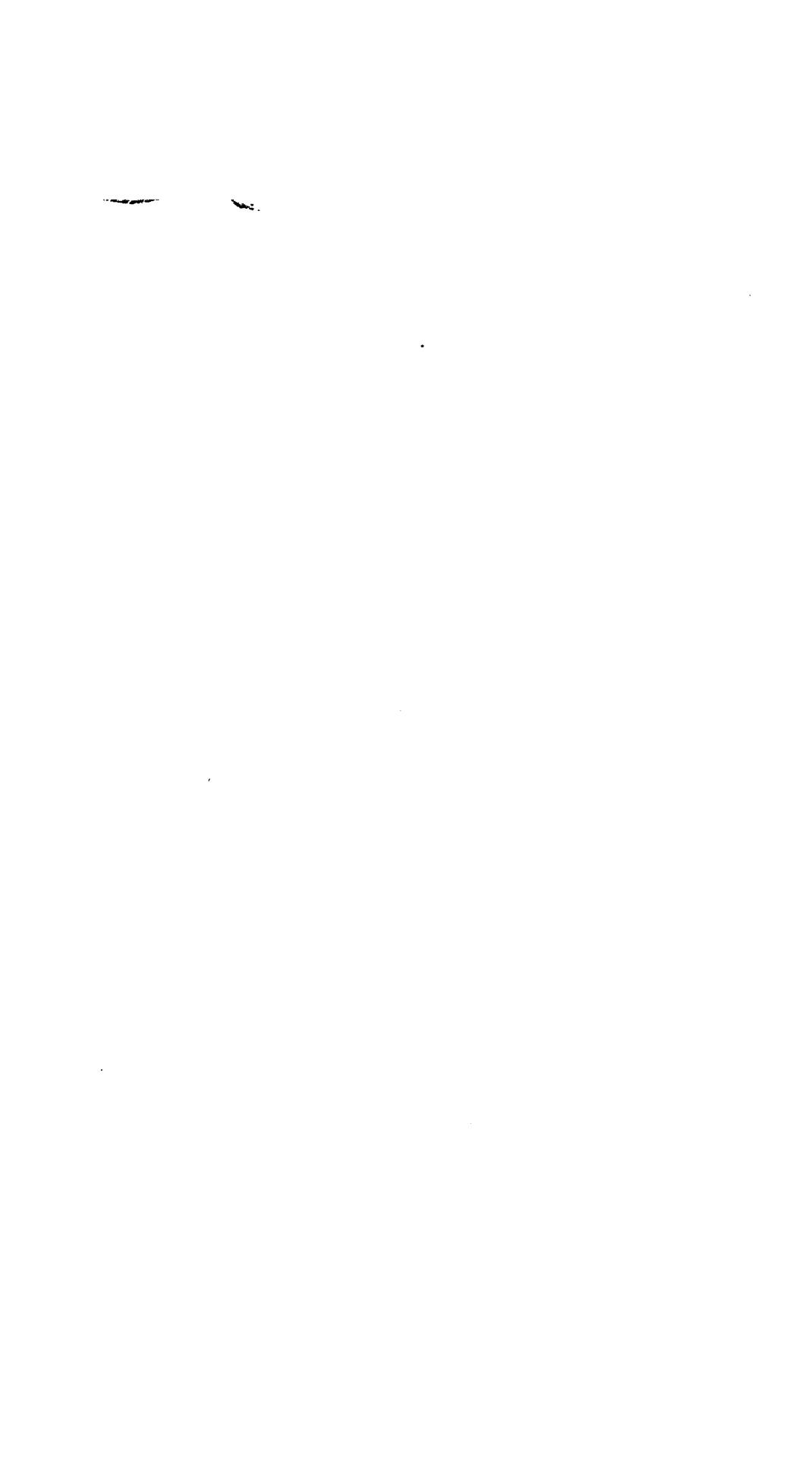
THE only point where the Grand Canyon is easily accessible to travellers is at the Bright Angel Trail, sixty-five miles north of the main line of the Santa Fé. You take a branch road that strikes off from Williams across the desert—a desert of red earth stained with alkali and supporting a scanty growth of sagebrush and moss, stray bits of grass and sometimes a straggling patch of scrub cedar. As you go on, the cedars become more numerous and larger, and there are also pines which gradually multiply until the country is pretty uniformly wooded, though the forest is never dense nor the trees of imposing size.

In this sober evergreen woods, at the end of the journey, is a settlement, which, with its tents and other rough structures clustering among the trees, is suggestive of a campmeeting village. The only building that does not accord with this idea is a great hotel, supposed

4 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

most half way across, I see we wouldn't quite make the other crest and I turned the horse around and came back. We'd pretty near reached the ground—in fact, we was within about six foot of it—and I thought we was goin' to land with such a thump that I jumped off and let the horse go the rest of the way alone."

The wind thrashed around all night, but quieted somewhat in the morning, though still far from gentle. The sky looked threatening, and we had a squall of sleet. Then the sun glimmered out doubtfully, and I engaged a guide to pilot me down the seven mile trail. I chose to walk, and he followed close behind leading a saddled mule. Our goal was the Colorado River, deep in the chaos of adamantine channels and vast crags on which I had looked from the rim. You would hardly suspicion there was a chance for any trail, the bordering bluffs are so immense and so perpendicular. But at one place is a crevice choked with fragments from the cliffs and a little earth that has washed in. Here has been made a slender zigzag path that crawls gingerly down the incline, always turning and twisting and taking advantage of every chance to make the descent safe and easy. Nevertheless, it is the rudest kind of a highway, and there was too much mud and too many loose stones in the path for comfortable walking. In places a passage had been blasted along the face of a cliff, and the unprotected outer edge dropped away vertically to dizzy depths not at all agreeable to contemplate.





A guide on the Bright Angel Trail

My guide's name was Tom, and I was told that his last name had originally been Catt, but that this surname had been changed by an act of the legislature, as it was not to his liking to pass through life known always as Thomas Catt. He was a jolly fellow, voluble and humorous. His language was, however, inclined to the sulphurous and we were constantly encountering places or objects along the trail that, according to his tell, the Almighty had had something to do with, and hadn't blessed, either. He had served on the Bright Angel Trail for years, but he said this was his last season there. "I've looked at the Grand Canyon until I'm gettin' cross-eyed," he declared.

The views as we went on were no longer confined to the downlook, but the gigantic, many-tinted bluffs and pyramided masses loomed far above and made a ragged and ever-changing sky-line. The rocks were often quite architectural in appearance and suggested vast and solemn cathedrals, or church organs that would perhaps break forth into the mightiest music the world had ever heard.

Tom presently stopped to light his pipe. "You'll be tired by night," said he, "if you walk the whole distance down and back. Still, a good many do it. They're apt to get pretty well tuckered though, especially in hot weather. Once I was coming out of the canyon with a party, and down below, where the path is very

6 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

twisted, at what we call Jacob's Ladder, a woman was settin'. She'd walked to the river and was on her way back; but she said she couldn't go no farther nohow, and unless she could get a ride she was goin' to die right thar. So I let her get on my horse and I followed on foot. Well, sir, when we got to the top and she was off the horse she turned to me and said, 'If I had any way of reporting you and the whole outfit that manage this trail I would sure do it.'

" 'What for?' I asked.

" 'Because,' says she, 'you are the most ignorant and inconsiderate lot of people I ever see. You got no business to have any such rough trail, and you got no business to allow a person to walk down it. You ought to be prosecuted!' and she walked off, and never even said, 'Thank you,' for the use of my horse."

A little farther on, the guide pointed to a slide of loose rock at the foot of the cliff we were edging along, and said, "Do you see that dead burro down thar? It tumbled off here the other day. It was in a pack train, and the kid who had charge rushed the burros up in a bunch, and while he was trying to straighten 'em out this one was crowded off. We lose an animal about every year that way. But thar never has been a human life lost, though eight or ten thousand people go over the trail now each year. It's a wonder to me that some of the women haven't come to grief before this.

You never know what a woman will do. They're always screechin' at you, 'Oh,' guide, my saddle is loose!' and, 'Oh, guide, I can't stay on any longer!'

"We have to keep jollyin' 'em to make 'em forget what sort of a road they're travellin'. You can manage 'em that way very well, but if a *man* gets nervous than ain't no use. You can't work on his mind in any such fashion, and he gives you no end of trouble. Thar was one fellow recently that another guide and I got to joshing as we went down the trail about its dangers, and how if a man started to fall he'd go quarter of a mile without stoppin'. We didn't think but that he was takin' it all right when suddenly he slid off his horse and said he wa'n't goin' no farther. We tried to reason with him, but he was plumb scared out of his senses, and he struck the back trail. He wouldn't even mount his horse, and he crawled all the way on his hands and knees, clinging to the inner wall. I reckon he was on the verge of snakes.

"Everybody takes pride in the trip after it's over, especially the women, no matter how much discomfort they've suffered. 'Why, I went way down thar and back, the whole distance, fourteen miles,' a woman will say afterward to her friends, 'and I rode a mule—think of it!'

"Yes, the women consider they've done a big thing; but they're like an Irishman I know of who had charge

8 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

of a squad workin' on the railroad. One morning he hustled his men around and scolded 'em so, they begun to conclude something was the matter. At last one of 'em said, 'Mike, what the devil makes you so peppery today?'

" 'I'm not,' says he.

" 'Yes ye are!' says the other. 'Ye been swearin' at us the whole mornin'.'

" 'Well, Jimmy,' says Mike, 'ye know I've a wife and children to support, and only these two hands of mine to earn a living. It's been none too airy in the past; and last night the ould woman brought me twins. Haven't I good raison for bein' out of temper?'

" 'Ah, Mike,' says Jimmy, 'ye may talk; but I'll guarantee ye wouldn't take tin thousand dollars for them twins.'

" 'Perhaps not,' said Mike slowly, thinkin' it over; 'perhaps not, but I wouldn't give tin cints for another pair.'

" That's the way with a woman who goes over this trail. One trip does for a lifetime. She wouldn't take ten thousand dollars for the experience after it is over; but she wouldn't give ten cents to repeat it."

Among the upper cliffs the snow streaks lingered. However, we had soon descended to where the fresh leafage of spring was bursting the buds, and the flowers were in bloom, and later got down to where the sturdy

century plants flourished. Our surroundings were in the main a rocky wilderness, yet wherever there was a slope of broken fragments, or a niche or hollow to retain a little sod, some form of plant life was sure to get a foothold. Along the higher portion of the trail grew occasional tall, handsome firs; but most of the canyon trees were dwarfed and twisted cedars and pines. Rabbit brush, greasewood, Mormon tea and squaw-bush were the common shrubs, and there were thickets of oak bushes, and numerous clusters of soap-weed. "You dry the roots of that soap-weed," said Tom, "and then put them in water and they make a foam right off."

He informed me that later in the season, "flowers of all kinds known" bloomed in the canyon, and that then there would be an "awful lot of birds." At present, though we sometimes heard the cry of a blue jay, or the cheerful twitter of wrens, the valley was rather silent. We were still on the upper portion of the trail when we heard a pack train approaching on the zigzag path from far below. Tom gave a halloo that roused the echoes and brought a response from the driver of the pack train. We met him at length. He had four burros in his charge moving in single file ahead of him, each loaded with a pair of five gallon cans filled with water from a spring half-way down to the river. The water was for the use of one of the hotels at the summit.

10 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

The fellow urged the beasts on by a shrill whistling and by calling out, "Bobby!" "Sandy!" etc., according as this one or that one lagged.

"Those burros are foxy creatures," remarked my guide as they went on up the trail. "See 'em stop and look. They'll go anywhere a goat will. Now I'll mount my mule. I would have rode before, but yesterday it carried a fat Dutchman who made its back sore. He was so fat and round that when you got him on mule-back he looked just like a punkin. Do you see this side trail that branches off here? That goes around the bluff a mile and a half to the Hogan mine. The mine ain't worked now, and I don't think it ever paid. I've never been thar, and if I could have a deed of it just for goin' to see it I wouldn't take the trouble."

Half-way down we came to a comparative level where a little stream wandered among some green willows, and where a cluster of tents had been erected for the sojourning of persons who wished to stay in the valley over night. Here by the stream there was, until the middle of the last century, a colony of Indians. They irrigated some of the surrounding land and raised patches of corn, watermelons and wheat. No doubt they could supply practically all their wants right in the canyon and only climbed out at long intervals. The fact that they lived there did not help to make the place more accessible. Indians never improve a trail



12 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

Though the river is narrow it is very deep, and is in reality one of the great rivers of North America. Traced back to the source of its principal tributary it is two thousand miles long, and it drains an enormous amount of territory. Yet for the most part its course is in the heart of a region of arid plains, wild forests and rugged mountains, far from settlements or the common routes of travel, and until recent years it has remained practically unknown.

The first whites to obtain a view of the big canyon were the members of a Spanish expedition in 1540, but they failed in all efforts to descend into the chasm. For three centuries afterward it was only seen at long intervals by occasional travellers, herdsmen or trappers who happened to wander into the region. Even after 1850 when surveying parties began to investigate portions of the river, its course for the hundreds of miles that it flows in the depths of the monstrous chasm continued to be a matter of conjecture. It was believed that not only were there impassable rapids and falls, but that in places the stream flowed along under ground. Thus, to attempt its navigation was to court death.

Yet in spite of all this, Major J. W. Powell in 1869 undertook its exploration by going down it with nine men and four boats. He started on the Green River in Utah. One of the men presently left and returned to civilization, and three others, after holding out against

the terrors of the trip for many weeks, decided they would prefer to encounter the perils of the unknown desert. Unfortunately, they fell in with hostile savages when they climbed out on the plateau, and they were ambushed and killed. Their comrades completed the trip with safety, though after many capsizings in the rapids, and narrow escapes from drowning, and the loss of two boats.

Nearly opposite where I then was, Major Powell discovered a little stream of clear water joining the muddy current of the river. Because of the purity of the water he called the stream Bright Angel Creek, and this name has been appropriated for the trail on the other side of the Colorado.

The canyon began to be known to tourists soon after the Santa Fé railroad was completed in 1882, but the long rough ride to get to the rim, and the expense made the visitors few. Facilities gradually improved, yet nothing like crowds came till 1901 when the branch railroad to the Bright Angel Trail superseded the old stages.

Trails which offer a descent to the river are very few. This particular one was discovered by the two Cameron brothers in 1889. They were prospecting for minerals and had a boat by means of which they explored the river for a hundred miles in this vicinity. One day they chanced to observe the crevice where the trail now is

14 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

and followed it to the upland. They found some veins of copper near by that they hoped might prove profitable; but they also, as my guide said, "were a-figuring on this as a sight-seeing place." Two years later they dug and blasted a rude path up the ravine, and by right of discovery and the work they did, they became owners of the property, though at the time, to quote my guide again, "They were poor men and had come here with almost nothin'. They had no more than the butt end of a shoestring, you might say."

Tom and I presently turned back. When we reached the half-way camp the western walls of the canyon were obscured by shreds of showers, and the sun had disappeared in dark and threatening clouds. I secured a horse and rode the rest of the journey. A drenching rain soon began to fall, and the water poured off my hat brim, and the trail got muddy and slippery. It was hard work for the creatures. We let them have free rein and they climbed with their noses lowered almost to the ground. The landscape in the mists was more imposing than ever. All the wild medley of buttressed cliffs and lonely pinnacles became vague and evanescent. Much of what would usually have been in view was hidden altogether or came and went with the shifting of the storm. There was no beginning or end to the world roundabout. The only solid portion was that under our feet. The rest was a mystery of



In the depths of the canyon

cloud and fog and a dreamland of half-discerned titanic crags. Even the near trees were softened into an aspect unknown before, and the shrubbery twinkled with water drops.

As we neared the top we could hear a roaring sound as of surf along the seashore. It was the wind in the trees at the crest. Now the rain turned to snow, and when we climbed out of the canyon we came into a world of white with a wild wind whirling the flakes and buffeting the fog that rose in weird, baffled masses from the yawning valley depths. Our beasts huddled in the shelter of a shed, and I stiffly dismounted and ran off to warm myself and dry my wet clothing before the hotel fire.

The wind howled and banged about without ceasing through the night. "Jingoes!" commented one of the guides in the morning, "it tore around so I couldn't help a-thinking it might lift the old hotel off its base and send it down into the canyon."

The air outside was full of flying flakes and the rocks and trees on the windward side were coated with clinging snow. The great gorge was a vacancy of gray mist, and some new arrivals inquired where the canyon was, anyway. One man after looking down into the void and trying vainly to penetrate its vapors said, "I and my two daughters come here yesterday to see the canyon, and the trip has cost me a lot of money. I must

16 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

go away by the next train and I hain't seen a durn thing but snow and fog. I no business to have come at this time of year. March is a mean month. It ought not to be allowed."

The weather did not encourage wandering, and I went to visit a Hopi Indian house erected not far from the hotel for the benefit of tourists. It was a flat-roofed, terraced building of stone, with rough ladders set up against it to give access to the upper stories. Most of the interior was devoted to the display and sale of curios; but in one room were a number of Indian women squatted on the floor shaping pottery, and in a second apartment were both men and women carding wool, spinning thread and weaving blankets.

Back of the Hopi house were two Navajo wigwams—dome-shaped, with a stout framework of heavy sticks daubed over with mud. The huts looked as if they attained the acme of crowded discomfort, but I was told that their occupants were suited. "There was a time," said my informant, "when the government built some good frame houses for the Navajoes, and they were much pleased, but they put their stock into the new dwellings and continued to live themselves as before."

I spent most of the day at a small two-story hotel owned by the Cameron brothers, the discoverers and owners of the Bright Angel Trail. We had an open fire of pitch pine, and it flamed up vigorously and threw

out a fine volume of heat. The company included Ralph Cameron, Tom Catt and two or three other guides, and a German artist named Wix.

"You've got to work on the trail all the time in order to keep it in good shape," remarked Ralph between puffs at his pipe. "It'll have to be gone over after this storm. The stones slide in and the earth washes away. If the trail was neglected for a year it would be impassable to horses. We have our worst rains in July—regular cloudbursts with terrific thunder and lightning. In an hour, or perhaps a quarter of an hour, the trail will be so gutted that the expense of repairing it is three or four hundred dollars. You never can tell when the storms are coming. I've seen the weather clear as a bell, and in five minutes it would be raining pitchforks.

"My cook has just told me he was going to quit tomorrow. I don't know but I shall have to find a Chinaman. The Chinese make the best help in the world. They never try to be fresh with you, they're clean, and they won't go off and leave you in the lurch. They always give fair warning. There was a time when I was living at Flagstaff that we ran 'em out of there—made 'em git. But we were sorry for it afterward. They'd owned most of the restaurants, and you could get a good meal for two bits (twenty-five cents), while after they left prices jumped up and you had to pay six bits for the same food. In fact, the eating-house people

18 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

got so independent a really good meal wasn't to be had at any price. There was such a lot of trouble that finally we let the Chinese back. They're the most industrious class I've ever seen. You never come across a broke Chinaman around begging, and it's very seldom they need any attention from the police, because if they have any rows it's among themselves.

"Did you hear the coyotes last night? They were howling when I went to bed at ten o'clock."

"The wind made such a racket," said I, "that I couldn't hear anything else."

"Oh, yes, you could," declared Tom, the guide. "The coyotes got more wind than the elements. You could have heard them above the gale well enough, and you can hear 'em at some time every night. It's like a lot of kids hollerin', and one coyote will make as much noise as twenty dogs. They come to eat the refuse the hotels dump out in the woods, and they clean it all up, too."

"They're a cowardly animal," remarked Ralph, "and they won't attack anything bigger than a lamb unless they get very hungry. Then they may kill a full-grown sheep if they get it separate from the flock. They're nothing like as bad as the lobo wolves. There's a bounty of a dollar on coyotes, while on wolves it's twenty dollars. If a wolf gets in among the sheep it won't stop short of killing a dozen or two. Then it

stays around there to eat 'em till the bodies are all gone. It don't mind the flesh getting putrid. Its appetite ain't in the least delicate and it cleans up practically everything. It even crunches and makes way with nearly all the bones. So there's little left but the wool. They ain't numerous. I s'pose, if they were, President Roosevelt would come here and chase 'em out or kill 'em off."

"Well," said another of the party, "I hope his hunting would have a little less of the show-off in it than the ride he took from here to Grand View. It's sixteen miles, and he galloped there in an hour and twelve minutes. A man ought not to attempt it over our roads in much less than twice that time. He rode away from all his attendants, and it was only luck that he didn't ruin his horse."

"I made better time than he did once," observed Tom, "and over a longer distance. I rode twenty-two miles in an hour and a half. But I was runnin' away from the sheriff, and was obliged to git over the line."

"The speech the president made here has always struck me as funny," said Ralph. "He told us to save the canyon for our children and our children's children. It'll be here. What under heaven does he think we were going to do with a gorge thirteen miles across and a mile deep—fill it up?"

20 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"The things you have speak of wild animals," said the artist, "remind me of an experience in Canada. I was tell there about hunting bears, and how many there be, and how savage. When I was out in the forest sketching I was very much scare and think what I might do. If I do as I feel, no tree too high for me to climb up, and when I get to the top I would make some yells for papa and mama. But it seem to me that the best would be to point my umbrella at the bear and open and shut it in his face. He not know the meaning of that and go away.

"Nothing happen till one day just as I was finish sketching and am packing up I see a bear sure enough. He was a little fellow, and he was snuffle around to get something. He did not see me yet, and I says to myself, 'Dis is a cub, and I need not be frighten of him, but I shall have soon to hurry, or the whole family will be here, and then they will make me all kind of trouble.'

"So I grab my things and was starting to run when I met a man. 'Get away from here!' I say. 'Dere's a bear back behind me!'

" 'Where?' he ask.

"I point at it.

"'Ho!' he say, 'dat is a porcupine;' and it was, and I have all my scare for nothing."

"About the funniest creature we've got in this country," said Ralph, "is the trade rat. It lives in the canyon

and builds its nest in cracks of the cliffs out of sticks and rubbish; and it puts cactus thorns and all sorts of sharp instruments on the outside for a defence. The way the rats get their name is that when they take anything of yours they always put something in its place—a stick or burr or whatever comes handy. They will take anything they can carry whether the thing is of any use to them or not. I've known 'em to steal knives and forks."

"Yes," said one of the guides whom the others called "Bill," "I lost a spoon over a foot long, one night; and after hunting all around I found it where a trade rat had drug it, two hundred yards away. Another time there was a feller in camp with me who put down his hat when he got ready to go to sleep and laid his pipe and tobacco pouch in it. Next morning the pipe and tobacco were gone, and in their place were two lumps of dirt."

"The most remarkable thing I know of," said Tom, "is the different color of rattlesnakes here in Arizona. Over in the Graham Mountains I've seen 'em as black as soot, and that's the only place I ever did see them right black. Down in the canyon they're grayish, and there's some places in the desert where they're bright yellow. They take their color pretty much from the earth they're in."

22 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"There's just one thing I like about rattlesnakes," said Ralph. "They give you warnin' before they attempt to bite."

"Unless you step on 'em," said Tom. "Then they don't waste any time; but none of our snakes will go out of their way to attack a man."

"There's seldom anyone dies from a snake bite," remarked Bill. "Whiskey is the best remedy, and ammonia is good, rubbed on and taken internally. I tell you the most infamous little snake is the side-winder."

"He is a vicious beggar," said Cameron, "and it's lucky he is a desert snake and small. I've never seen one over eighteen inches long. There's millions of 'em down below Yuma. Their tracks are as thick in the sand there as if the ground had been gone over with a rake. When you get near one it moves off sideways a-watchin' you all the time."

"Rattlesnakes are great hands to live in prairie-dog holes," said Bill, "and there's often owls in the same holes, too. Them prairie dogs are a curse to lots of country. Their mounds and holes are a nuisance in the first place, and the dogs eat every green thing around. Where there's a whole town of them they make a regular waste."

"Still storming," said Tom, looking out of the window. "I suppose the water train won't be comin' up today."



Indian blanket weaving

"No," responded Ralph, "and I wish we had that spring up here at the top."

The thin surface soil and underlying porous limestone do not hold water any more than would a sieve, and the nearest spring on the upland is forty-five miles distant. Even when found, the desert water is often of doubtful character. It may be tainted with alkali or other substances. As a result it is perhaps poisonous, or possibly it is simply bitter, or puckers the mouth.

"Poison waters are usually as clear and nice to look at as any you ever see," explained Bill. "One time me 'n' another feller was goin' 'cross country, and we got awful thirsty. So when we come to a sparklin' pretty stream—say, we just lit into it; but the water made us dreadful sick; and I been willin' to leave alkali waters and such on as that alone since then."

"Have you seen that new girl who's workin' in the sales department at the Hopi house?" asked Tom. "Her name is Mrs. Wells, and she's about as bright as they make 'em. Last week I thought I'd play a joke on her. I was takin' a party there to show 'em the Indians and things, and I said to 'em, 'Now I wish you'd be very particular how you speak before these Indians and not say anything to hurt their feelin's. Some of 'em understand English. Then, too, there's some who are very light complected so't you might not know they was Indians. One girl in particular I want

26 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

so astonishing a play of light and shade. The mountains of the chasm seemed to be engaged in a game of hide and seek in the mists, now peering forth, now disappearing in the darkling shadows. The light constantly varied; sometimes dim and tender; sometimes clear, gleaming on the many-tinted crags with marvelous purity, and glancing along from buttress to buttress, yet always drifting on and shifting to new shapes and making fresh combinations. Presently there appeared a rainbow glorifying one of the retreating showers, and it was so vivid it glowed as if it were of fire and not a mere reflection. The shower moved off, the rainbow faded, the sunlight shimmered over the nearer portion of the valley while the farther recesses of the great chasm reposed in a blue gloom under the cloud shadows. It was a wondrous vision.

On my last evening at the Grand Canyon there was a raffle. A young half-breed guide, whom the others knew as "Jess Bearclaws" was going away, and he wanted to turn his silver-mounted saddle into money. It had cost him forty-five dollars, but he was willing to dispose of it for thirty, and for a day or two had been wandering around with a paper getting signers for fifteen chances at two dollars a chance. The guides, drivers and clerks were mostly quite ready to help him out, though one clerk refused on the ground that he had no more use for a saddle than for a balloon. Now

the chances were all sold and the time had come to determine who was to win the prize. The investors with a few exceptions were on hand early and paid their dues and chaffed and chewed and smoked and discussed the raffle with great seriousness. Meanwhile the absentees were sent for and someone went to hunt up three dice.

"I take a chance on everything that comes along," said a bleary-looking fellow known as "Yellowstone Jack." "It's only a dollar or two, and what does that matter?"

Presently Jess Bearclaws accosted a tall chap named Buckland and said, "I bet you five dollars I've got more money in my pocket than you have."

Everyone was aghast, for Buckland was a nabob among his fellows and reputed to be worth one hundred thousand dollars.

"I take that bet," said he.

"Well," said Jess, "you ain't got any money in my pocket, have you?"

"I didn't say I had," retorted Buckland, and then followed a long discussion as to what that ambiguous bet of the half-breed amounted to.

My guide Tom came in late, paid his two dollars, and remarked, "Now I'm happy—for I'm just as free of money as a fish is of feathers."

28 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

Presently the gang adjourned to an inner room, and when they reappeared Buckland had won the saddle. "I knew he would!" exclaimed Tom. "There never was such a fellow for luck. He could go down and fall in the Colorado River and come out with his pockets full of trout."

Everybody laughed, and the joke was appreciated the more because there are no trout in the river.

NOTE.—It is possible to see the Grand Canyon by a two days' interruption of one's journey east or west, and to get in those two days fairly satisfactory and varied impressions; but a week would be better. If you plan to do much tramping your shoes should be stout and thick-soled. Ladies will find short walking skirts a convenience. Divided skirts are preferable for the horseback journey down the trail, and in summer a broad-brimmed straw hat is a comfort. Both of these articles can be rented at the hotels. A vigorous person, accustomed to rough walking can descend to the river and return on foot, but for most a horse is a necessity, especially for the upward climb.

There are several outjutting points within easy riding or walking distance of the Bright Angel Trail that are well worth visiting for the views they afford. One of the longer jaunts is eight miles west to the Boucher Trail, and another is thirteen miles east to Grand View Trail. Each of these descents into the chasm has features peculiar to itself. At the latter is a good hotel, and the panoramic views from the vicinity, and the variety of short trips that are possible from here make it exceptionally attractive. Among other things there is a chance to visit a pueblo village of the Hopi Indians.

The railroad furnishes the easiest and quickest way of getting to the Canyon, but some tourists prefer to go across the mesas and through the pine forests by wagon from Flagstaff. This makes a

two days' trip of seventy-five miles. The road is good except in winter. Near Flagstaff is the noted Lowell Observatory; and within a few miles is Walnut Canyon where are scores of quaint cliff-dwellings, the most famous group of the kind in the region. In another direction, nine miles from the town, some of the ruins of the cave-dwellers may be seen on the summit of an extinct volcano. The magnificent San Francisco Peaks are just north of Flagstaff, and a road has been constructed up Humphrey's Peak, the summit of which is 12,750 feet above the sea level.

On my way across Arizona an old lady who sat in the next seat ahead remarked to her companion, "I think we must be somewhere near that putrified forest I've heard tell about."

She looked out of the window and pointed at some bare, ragged-sloped mesas we were passing. "Seems to me," said she, "these hills look kind o' putrified—yes, the rocks certainly do look just like putrified mud."

She had not quite hit the word she wanted, and her geographical ideas were somewhat hazy; but a petrified forest covering thousands of acres is one of the wonderful features of Arizona. This is most readily reached from Adama, and one portion of the forest is only six miles distant. Here is the notable natural log bridge, and the ground is carpeted with agate chips, and strewn with sections of agate trunks from two to four feet in diameter.

II

ON THE BORDERS OF MEXICO

WHAT I saw of Arizona and Eastern California as I sped across them on the journey to the coast was for the most part barren, parched and forlorn to the last degree. As one of my fellow tourists remarked, "I don't see what all this land is good for except to hold the world together."

But suddenly the desert was left behind and we were amid blossoming gardens and green, luscious fields, and orange orchards with their dark, vigorous foliage all a-twinkle with golden globes. What a land of enchantment it did seem after those long days on the train hastening over the frosty and arid plains, and how the fresh full-leaved greenery did delight one's heart! All things were growing and flourishing, the weeds were getting rank, the wildflowers were in bloom, and everywhere in home yards were callas and other hot-house and summer flowers in prodigal profusion.

To get as near the tropics on our west coast as possible I journeyed to San Diego, and on the way thither I

had my first sight of the Pacific rolling its thunderous surf up on the beach and dimpling softly under the half clouded sky as far as the eye could reach. At San Diego I renewed my acquaintance with it, and spent much of the first day rambling along the waterside. I lingered longest in the section where the fishermen dwell. Their little cottages are many of them on piles and are over the water at high tide. This has its advantages, but there had been a storm the previous Sunday which made the pile-dwellers wish their homes were on the firm ground. It was as wild a gale as even the oldest inhabitant could remember, and the wind rose till the spray flew over the cottage platforms and wet the floors inside. To make matters worse the little rowboats and the fishing craft and some heavy timbers got away from their moorings in the harbor and butted into the supporting piles of the dwellings.

"Oh, yes," said one lady, "it blowed so hard it done quite a good deal of damage. You see our garden out in front here. Everythin' in it was gettin' to look real nice; and now notice that yaller blossoming willow bush. It was crowded full o' flowers, but the storm just nacherly pretty near broke it down."

"We was lucky," said her husband, "that we didn't get into no badder troubles. Some houses was let down into the water and knocked all to pieces. Our house come near goin'. It had only two piles left under

32 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

the middle; and it got twisted so the door wouldn't open, while we was still inside. We begun to think we'd be drown, and I took a hatchet and pried off a window-casing. I'd 'a' knock the whole darn lights out rather than stay in there any longer. When we escaped I tried to save some boats that jammed in here next us. But when I had one partly pulled out a big wave piled twenty or thirty more on top, and I give up. After the storm I saved some broken pieces so I got a little of my damage back. I have sold part of them and they will furnish me tobacco money to last a while, anyway.

"I'm thinkin' it's goin' to rain again," he remarked as we were about to part. "I have a crooked toe that was shot in the Civil War, and that pains me every time the weather's turnin' bad. It never ain't failed me yet, and I feel a storm is comin' now."

I was still wandering about exploring the town when I was accosted by a bareheaded, swarthy gypsy woman who wanted to tell my fortune. The charge was two bits, she said, and I produced the money. Then she made a poor pretense of glancing at the lines of my hand and mumbled a sing-song repetition with slight variations about my having had much trouble, asserting in conclusion that, "You have make considerable money, but you spend it easy."

She hit it right about the spending so far as the quarter I had just parted with was concerned. Next she

pulled a couple of little threads out of the fringe of her shawl, and had me tie two knots in one of them and repeat after her, "Go way trouble." "Go way my bad luck."

That done she crumpled up the knotted string, slyly substituted the other, which she had kept concealed, and told me to pull it out—when lo! the knots were gone. Lastly she gave this thread a twist about one of my buttons and affirmed that if I didn't "tell nobody about it for eight days" I probably wouldn't have "no more trouble and bad luck." To make the thing certain, however, she wanted another quarter.

San Diego appealed to me most forcibly in the suggestions one caught everywhere that the place never experienced our savage Eastern winter. Yet there were chilly mornings and days of wind or rain, when a fire was a comfort. Otherwise everything conspired to make one feel it was early summer instead of March.

One morning I visited Old Town, an outlying suburb, which in the early days constituted all there was of San Diego. At that time the site of the present city was a sheep pasture. The parent village is pretty dead now, and many of the ancient adobe structures are in ruins, but others are still intact and occupied. Such structures are particularly interesting, because their massiveness gives them an air of repose and permanence, and because they are characteristic of the

34 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

common method of building in the days when California was a part of Mexico. The material employed is a very sticky, dark brown clay fashioned into blocks about four times the size of an ordinary brick. Sometimes straw cut up into pieces an inch or two long was worked into the clay mud. Wet clay was used as mortar when the blocks were laid. The timbers of the floors, doorways and windows were built in as the walls were in process of erection.

Eight miles from Old Town, up a neighboring valley, is the remains of an ancient Spanish Mission which I decided to see. The valley is wide, and its basin is mostly cultivated. Much of it was growing to barley, oats and other grains, then knee high, and there was Indian corn well started, and melons just coming up, and an abundance of garden truck of all sorts ready for market. The finest tract was farmed by a Chinaman. He had many acres as level as a floor and his crops were thriving admirably; but his home buildings were dilapidated, and even the house a mere shack. The litter of work and carelessness was dubiously evident all about, and the premises were so odorous that it was no joke to get to leeward of them.

Judging from the Chinaman's success, I imagined he would have rather a rosy opinion of the region, but some of the other dwellers in the valley were decidedly pessimistic. "California is overrated," said one of them



Early spring



to me. "Every farm in the state is for sale. You need money to enjoy this country, and it takes a good big purseful to run a farm and get it into shape to be profitable. A poor man, or a man of moderate means has no chance. He travels up hill all the time and often in the end has to sell out for a song. Lots of people have an idea there's money in fruit, but I've noticed our fruit growers usually make a profit one season and lose the next nine."

The man did not appear very energetic, and his land did not look as if he worked it with much vigor or judgment. No doubt he painted the country in tints out of his own experience. Another man I talked with was a grizzled old fellow of a different type. He was carrying a post on his shoulder, and when I accosted him he dropped the butt end to the ground. Every few minutes he shifted the post up to his shoulder as if about to go on, but the conversation would take a fresh start and down would go the post once more. He did not agree with the neighbor whom I have quoted. "Oh, no," said he, "not every place is for sale. The majority are, but there's exceptions. I wouldn't sell mine—leastways, not unless I got a good big price for it.

"I was over in Arizona lately," he continued, "and on the train that brought me back I had a talk with a Missouri man, who was comin' to the coast to settle with his whole family; and he said, 'My little girl has

36 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

been thinkin' they have gold houses out in California and gold sidewalks and gold everything. She says she reckons they have gold taters to eat.'

"It's a good deal the same with the older folks. They are often disappointed simply because they have unreasonable expectations. Yes, that's just it, and they've got a lot to learn. It ain't no soft job here. There's plenty to do all the time, and if you want to succeed you haven't hardly got time to talk to anyone. Even an industrious man don't find it all straight sailin.' This region is naturally kind of a desert. Just now for a few years we're havin' rain, and everythin' is green and flourishin'. You couldn't have better pasturage, and we don't have to feed our stock anything in addition to what they pick up themselves, the year through. But before this wet spell there was eleven years we only had one good rain. The streams went dry, the wells went dry, and the feed all shrivelled up in the pastures. Why, we had to give the stock cactus to eat. We'd make a quick brush fire and take the cactus and singe off the thorns, and that singed cactus was what the cattle lived on. I sold most of my cows at ten dollars apiece the feed got so scanty.

"Another thing we've found out is that we can't raise fruit in this neighborhood. The trees will do well for three or four years; but see here," and with his post he thumped some clay laid bare in a washed-out



The launching of the ship

gully, "under the surface soil a foot or two is this old adobe, and it's got alkali in it. That's the boy that ruins the fruit trees. The roots, as soon as they strike it, crumple up, and your trees begin to croak and don't flourish any more.

"But the situation is like this—a man who comes here and works hard and uses some common sense and adapts himself to the country will prosper. One day I was callin' on a genoowine old Dutchman who is livin' a few miles away. 'Vell,' he says, 'dis desert does look fine when it rains.'

"He's got about sixteen children, and you might think he'd have trouble supportin' 'em. I mentioned something of the sort, but he replied, 'I make a living here,' and he gave a big wink and then said, 'and I makit one dollar besides.'

"So can other people."

It was a half-clouded morning, and the weather was reminiscent of a sultry day in June at home. The heat was full of moist, growing power, and the pastures and waysides were besprinkled with blossoms of every hue. Poppies, thistles and morning-glories were easily recognized, but most of the blossoms were unfamiliar, and they made a pageant of color such as the East never witnesses. One's ears were greeted with the buzz of flies, the chirrup of insects, and by the croaking of frogs on the sodden lowlands. The walk was quite

40 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

churches and other buildings. Thus in time rose the pillars, arched corridors and domes of the stately structures that are still impressive even in their ruins. Gradually a village grew about each church; for the Indians were encouraged to live near by, and some of the Mission communities numbered thousands.

The chief structure at a Mission was usually in the shape of a hollow square with a front of four or five hundred feet along which extended a gallery. The church formed one of the wings, and in the interior was a court adorned with trees and a fountain. Round about was a corridor whence doors opened into the friars' sleeping apartments, workshops, storehouses, school-rooms, etc. At sunrise a bell was rung and the Indians assembled in the chapel for prayers. Afterward they had breakfast and were distributed to their work. At eleven they ate dinner, and work was resumed at two. An hour before sunset the Angelus bell was tolled and labor was abandoned for religious exercises in the chapel. Supper followed, and then the Indians were free to take part in a dance or other mild amusements.

The rule of the friars was in the main just and kindly. Drunkenness was punished by flogging, and the offenders in quarrels between husbands and wives were chained together by the legs till they promised to keep the peace. Fresh recruits were secured by sending out parties of Indians already attached to the new

Crossing at a ford



mode of life and letting them set forth to the savages its advantages, though it is said they were also sometimes captured by main force. The domestic animals imported for the use of the Missions multiplied with great rapidity, and in the care of them the Indians became very dexterous. Hides, tallow, grain, wine and oil were sold to ships visiting the coast, and from the proceeds the friars supplied the Indians with clothing, tobacco and such other things as appealed to the taste or fancy of the savage converts. Surplus profits were employed in embellishing the churches.

The Missions were established at about a day's journey apart on the natural route of travel along the coast, and they were the usual stopping-places for travellers. Whenever one of these sojourners arrived he was welcomed with the hospitality of the Bible patriarchs. First of all his horse was led away to the stables, and the man was escorted to a bath. Afterward he was given a plentiful meal and a comfortable bed, and he was at liberty to stay as long as he chose.

The maximum of Mission prosperity was attained in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The friars and their neophytes owned countless herds of cattle, horses, sheep, goats and swine, and produced from the ground all their simple needs required. At each Mission were inclosed gardens and orchards where grew a considerable variety of vegetables and many

42 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

fruits, including figs, oranges, olives and grapes. But white settlers were increasing, and contact with them tended to corrupt the Indians and to make them less easily controlled. The greed of the newcomers was aroused by the wealth of the Missions in land and herds, and in 1833 they influenced the Mexican congress to pass a law secularizing the Missions and turning over their property to public purposes, except for some small allowances reserved to maintain the churches. This enabled the politicians of the period to plunder the Missions very thoroughly, and the administrators who were appointed wasted no time in getting the tangible property into the hands of themselves and their friends.

So serious was the desolation wrought, and so evil were the effects on the Indians that the law was rescinded, but the mischief had been done, and the Missions were not able to recuperate. The ruin was completed by the American conquest, and the few remaining Indians were driven or enticed away. That they and their ancestors had been cultivating the lands for three-quarters of a century made no difference. The Americans wishing to pre-empt claims did not regard the presence of Indian families or communities as any more a deterrent than they would have so many coyotes. What cared the rude frontiersmen for missionary friars or civilized Indians? They came to squat on public

lands, and they not only took such tracts as pleased their fancy, but in some cases the Mission structures were demolished for the sake of the timber, tiles and other building materials that were in them.

Every visitor at San Diego makes a trip to the village of Tia Juana, just across the line in Mexico. The idea is cultivated that by so doing one will get a brand new impression and that he will see a bit of Mexico which will serve as a fair sample of the whole. It is sixteen miles down to the line, and a train takes you that far. Close by the terminus is a boundary monument, and some people find pleasure in standing with one foot in their own country and one in foreign territory. Often they have themselves photographed in that position. But the person who wants to make all he can out of the situation jumps back and forth across the line until he is tired. Then, when he reaches home and is asked if he has been to Mexico, he can truthfully respond, "Oh, yes, many times."

After you have had a look at the monument and indulged in such extras as seem desirable, you get into an omnibus drawn by four horses, and away you go over a road that I should judge had never received any attention since it was first travelled. There are holes and ruts and bumps and sloughs unnumbered, and whenever I thought we were going to capsize in one direction, the vehicle was sure to lurch and up went the

44 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

other side to the danger point. Much of the way was across a gullied, brushy level where the floods had rampaged. Worse still, we had to ford a swift and muddy river. Into it we splashed, and the horses half disappeared, while the water swashed up over the wheel-hubs and barely missed coming into the 'bus.

At last we reached Tia Juana. Its attractions were not very pronounced. There was just a wide street with a few shops and saloons on either side, and at some distance a straggling of shanty dwellings. It was on a bare plateau, but along the slope that dipped to the valley grew a few groups of trees. The plain swept away to a series of mountain ridges clothed with cacti and sagebrush. Such village men as were not employed in the shops seemed to be a lot of loafers, not given to exerting themselves much beyond the smoking of cigarettes.

The one notable institution of the place is a bull-ring, and the amphitheatre of seats rises conspicuously just outside the hamlet. It is the patronage of the Americans that keeps the thing going, and any Sunday on which there is to be a fight they come from San Diego in swarms. Extra trains are put on, and teams drive from the town and from the ranches for miles around to serve as stages for conveying the excitement seekers from the station to the bull-ring. The chief financier of the enterprise is a Mexican who has a diminutive

butcher shop in the village. It seems a somewhat appropriate branch of his everyday industry, but what can one say for the Americans who encourage the savage and degrading exhibitions?

The cost is a dollar for a seat in the sun, two dollars for a seat in the shade, and the audience is sure to number at least a thousand, and may rise to twenty-five hundred. It was said that the patronage had fallen off decidedly the year before because several horses had been gored to death. This was too much for the tender sensibilities of the American audience. The on-lookers were willing to see bulls killed, but not horses, and many of them refrained afterward from going. So now the toreadors have to fight on foot.

Between Tia Juana and San Diego is some very fine lemon country, and on my way back I had a talk with the owner of a twenty-acre orchard. "I come from Nebraska two years ago," he said, "and I wouldn't go back to live if you'd give me the whole state. It's too cold, and they have blizzards there that blow the trains off the railroad tracks. I looked around down here and found a feller that was sick of the lemon business, and we made a swap. I give him sixteen hundred acres I had in Nebraska, and he give me his twenty-acre lemon orchard. Some of my neighbors up where I come from told me I was makin' a poor bargain, but the Nebraska land was only worth about fifty cents an acre; so the

46 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

value of my sixteen hundred acres didn't count up very heavy. The feller I sold to didn't really want the property, and he made another dicker and let it go for the furnishings of a shooting-gallery in Los Angeles worth very little over three hundred dollars.

"They'd been havin' a spell of dry years, and the lemon orchards wa'n't payin' expenses; but the weather turned about and the trees began to do first-rate. It beats all how they will bear. There's blossoms and green fruit of every size and the ripe lemons right on the same tree the year through. I shall clear six or seven thousand dollars this year. Of course there's considerable expense, and I keep from two to six men at work and pay 'em a dollar and a half for a nine hour day. I don't hire any Mexicans—I don't like their color; and I don't hire niggers or Chinamen. I do considerable myself, but I feel that I'm kind o' gettin' lazy like everybody else that lives in this climate. It's very different from what I been used to. You notice the old men here. They ain't got the vim and spirit they have in the East. Back in Nebraska, an old man would think nothing of chasing a critter that had broke loose, but take a man of the same age in California, and you couldn't get up a run with a pitchfork.

"There's something about the air that slows you down; and I have an idee that once you get used to it you ain't really contented anywhere else. Some people

recollect their old home, in New England may be, and they think they'd like to go back there to live. One man whose home was near my lemon ranch was always talkin' that way, and finally he sold out and went; but inside of two months he was back. Things there wa'n't quite like what he remembered them, and the folks he used to know was mostly gone or changed. So he decided California was the place for him."

Nearly a score of miles east of San Diego is the broad fertile valley of El Cajon. It lies among the hills with lofty rugged mountains overlooking it from farther inland, and I went to see it, attracted by the fact that it is famous for its great vineyards whence are shipped each season hundreds of carloads of raisins. An irrigating flume circles the hillslopes, but this artificial watering does not entirely take the place of rain, and in dry years the crop is sure to be a partial failure. Most of the ranches of this handsome vale were mortgaged, I was told. There are so many chances in weather, in disease, in pests, and in price that a permanent success in fruit growing in Southern California seems to be somewhat rare. It is a not uncommon belief that dry and wet periods alternate, each covering a series of several years. Things boom in the wet cycle, while in the lean years many orchards and vineyards fare so badly that they become almost worthless.

48 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

I had come to El Cajon by train with the intention of walking back, and presently I was plodding along toward San Diego, most of the time on the level mesas, but now and then dipping into a valley. There were frequent orchards of oranges, grape-fruit, lemons and olives, some thrifty, some far otherwise. The orange trees, though still loaded with fruit were coming into blossom, and in places the air was honeyed with the perfume. Most of the homes I passed were commonplace little cottages, frequently only a story high, apt to be ugly from plainness, but sometimes equally ugly from over-ornamentation. Yet there were a number of really substantial and attractive dwellings, fine in themselves and charming in their flowery environment. One home had a great rank hedgerow of roses full of white blossoms; but much of the land was as wild as it ever had been, and was brushed over with chaparral and other shrubs, waist high. A good deal of this was government land that could be bought for a dollar an acre. The country was at its greenest, but when the spring rains were past the ground would gradually parch and by July all the fields and pastures and waysides where there was not an artificial water system would be clothed in somber brown, and they would so continue till near the end of the year.

Half way in my journey I was overtaken by a young fellow in a buggy, and he invited me to ride. I was



A Mexican

glad of the opportunity, for I was getting weary, and the landscape did not present much variety. He was from the East a twelve-month before and had been spending most of his time "cow-punching" in the mountains. He expressed the opinion that the country offered excellent chances to make money. But, if it was easy to make, it was also uncommonly easy to spend; "and yet," said he, "you can live here as cheaply as anywhere if you choose to do so. Now San Diego is quite a resort of old Civil war pensioners. They're there on the plaza every day sitting around under the shadow of the palms. I've talked with 'em and they say a man can bach' it—that is, get feed for himself livin' as a bachelor—for a dollar and a quarter a week, and a room will cost a dollar more. So a moderate pension will support a man without his doing anything."

In my own experience I found the gentle conditions of life were best exemplified by a man who dwelt near the beach. I had the feeling at first that I had fallen in with a shipwrecked mariner on a desert island. Just back out of reach of the waves he had a shanty seven feet one way by eight the other, and barely high enough to stand up in. It was built of all sorts of rubbish; and nearly everything in the house and round about might have been saved from some castaway vessel, and indeed was largely the salvage of the sea.

III

A RUSTIC VILLAGE

NOT for a long time had I been in a place that so filled me with delight as did Capistrano in Southern California. Such a dreamy, easy-going community—no hurry, no worry—such a luxuriant valley, such lofty environing hills with the green turf clothing every rounded outline! Then, to the north, were the rocky peaks of a mountain range, serene and blue in the distance. The village itself was a queer huddle of primitive houses, some no more than board shanties, and none of them large or in the least pretentious. However, the feature that gave especial distinction to the hamlet was the ruin of an old Mission, still impressive, calm and beautiful, and appealing powerfully to the imagination. It would interest one anywhere, and we can boast of so few ruins that have age and noble proportions in this new land of ours that the appeal was doubly strong. Though the Mission buildings are much shattered, some parts continue in use even to this day. The chime of four bells performs its accustomed service, one portion is



The story book

used as a church, and there is a fine corridor in an excellent state of preservation.

The structures were begun in 1776. Adobe was largely used for the walls, but the church was of stone with a lofty tower and a roof made of solid concrete domes. At early mass on Christmas morning in 1812 there was an earthquake that toppled over the tower onto the body of the building, and the entire roof crashed down. Forty-nine people were killed. "We've had no earthquake worth mentioning since," one of the leading Americans of the vicinity informed me. "Of course there have been a good many tremors, but they have been mere sardines compared with that shock of 1812, and we pay no more attention to them than we would to a spatter of rain."

The village was charmingly pastoral. The insects thrummed, the children laughed and called at their play, the roosters crowed in endless succession, the dogs barked, and the cattle lowed from the luscious hillslopes. And what throngs of birds there were! I saw them flitting everywhere and the air was a-thrill with their songs. The mocking-birds were lilting their varied notes, the turtle-doves sounded their mellow calls, and in the vicinity of the buildings were multitudes of linnets—pretty little birds and cheerful songsters, but very destructive to grapes, apricots, peaches, pears and berries. In the pastures the red-winged

54 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

blackbirds abounded, hovering about the sheep and cattle. Often they could be seen on the sheep's backs picking off ticks. Meadow larks were frequently within sight and hearing, but their song was decidedly coarser and less plaintive than in the East. I observed many gay little birds known as "canaries," and there were flickers and pewees and bee-martins and thrashers and numerous others. Of them all I perhaps most enjoyed the swallows. A few had been noticed flying about for a week or two; but the mass of them had come the evening before I arrived. Now they were darting everywhere, building under the eaves of the houses and barns and establishing a populous colony beneath the loftiest cornice of the old Mission ruin. Far up against the blue sky I would sometimes see the buzzards soaring. Nothing in the way of offal escapes their alert eyes or scent. Back in the hills, if a man killed a gopher or a rattlesnake or some such little creature, there might not be a buzzard in sight at the time, but the next day half a dozen would be around.

On the noon that I reached Capistrano the main street was full of teams tied to the wayside hitching rails, and yet the place seemed mysteriously devoid of human beings. At last I discovered the male inhabitants of the region gathered at the far end of the street in and about an adobe Justice Court. The wide doorway was jammed full of men peering over each others'



Among the arches of the old Mission

shoulders, and the case was evidently of the most absorbing and vital interest. At length, however, the gathering broke up, the village became populous, and one after another the teams were unhitched and driven away. The excitement, it seemed, concerned two individuals, one of whom had said the other was a liar, and the latter had responded that the former was a son of a gun and likened him to a variety of similar obnoxious things. But the court failed to get together a jury and the judge had dismissed the case. As a clerk in a local store expressed it, "The two fellers remind me of my schooldays when one of us kids'd sometimes go and complain to the teacher saying, 'Jimmy's been a-callin' me names.'

" 'What's he been callin' you?' she asks him.

" 'I don't like to tell you,' the boy says, 'It's awful bad things.' "

While I was in this store a fat old Indian entered. He had short hair, wore overalls, and except for his color was not much different in dress and appearance from a white workingman. His breath was odorous of liquor, and he was loquacious and happy. The clerk introduced him as the best sheep-shearer in the county. He shook hands and said, "Me good man! You good man?"

In talking with him it was not easy to catch the meaning of some of his remarks. The common patois of the

56 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

region used by both the whites and the darker skinned folk is based on Spanish, but with an intermixture of Indian and of words borrowed from the English. The old sheep-shearer had about fifty other Indians working under him in the season, got five dollars a day himself and two dollars for his wife who did the cooking for the gang. The wealth he acquired did not stick to him. He gambled it away.

Gambling was a common recreation among the villagers, and the place supported four "blind pigs," or unlicensed saloons. There were always loafers hanging about their porches and a noisy crowd inside playing pool. One of the Capistrano experts at poker was a Chinaman who had a ranch just outside the village. He lived in a dirty little hut there and kept his horse under a pepper tree with only the shelter afforded by the leafage. For ten miles around the people depended on him to supply them with vegetables. Some of the poorest families in the village bought of him, rather than take the trouble to raise their own vegetables, though they have the finest kind of land right at their doors. "He can't hardly speak three words of English," I was told; "but he'll sit down and play poker all right with any of us. Perhaps he'll lose fifty dollars or more in a single sitting and not go home till the small hours of the morning; and yet he'll be at his work that day as usual without batting an eye. No doubt, on the whole, he makes oftener than he loses."

One of my acquaintances was a short, stooping old German with a broken nose. He lived in an adobe house with walls two or three feet thick. "You keep der adobe dry," said he, "und it vill last forever; but der vather from der eaves spatters oop und vashes avay der bottom till it breaks down unless you be careful. Some puts on cement to make der valls look nice und last more long. We do not build adobe houses now. It is quicker to use boards, und you cannot keep them so clean as a board house, und the air is not so goot inside. Some of der adobe houses are one hundred years old already, I tink. I haf not lif here always. My business is a bee ranch, twelve miles back in der hills. My home vas out dere till der dry years make me move. If you git no rain dere be no flowers—no not'ing. Perhaps der bees can find enough to keep alive, bud dere is no vork you can do to help. Der vather give out und everyt'ing, und you might as vell come avay. Last year it vas goot—all right, und I t'ink dis year be good. So I soon shall haf to go dere. Dem hills are chock full o' flowers now—oh, yes—like a flower garden. I haf not been dere since last August. In another month the bees begin to swarm, und I haf to get ready for dot. You haf to be on der vatch or der swarms go avay. It ish not often dey vill go into another hive demselves. Dey come out und hang on a

58 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

bush while der scouts are lookin' for a goot place. Maybe a place is found und dey be off in one half hour. Maybe dey hang on der bush two, three day or a week.

"Many time we haf bees fly over dis town. Perhaps dey stop und someone catch und put dem in an old box, und dey make honey. Bud der honey ish not much goot. Der flowers down here are not like dose on der hills. Here der country soon be yellow mit wild mustard, und dat make der honey a bitter taste und catch in your throat, just like as if you eat too much pepper. You couldn't sell it. Sometimes a swarm vill get in a house. It vill go in a crack, und perhaps der bees vill make honey in der ceiling, und it vill begin to leak through. Den der people haf to tear a hole und drive der bees out.

"Der honey in der hills is white as vather. Der bees haf hundreds of kind of flowers dere, but der best is der sagebrush. I wear a veil when I handle der bees und gloves mitout fingers. You cannot tell ven der bees vill sting—some days not at all, und other days dey joost like bulldogs. Dey sting ven dey feels like it, according to der veather.

"Each hive of bees vill make from one hundred to five hundred pounds of honey in a goot season, und I get about thirty tons from my two hundred stands. Der bees fill der frames each season half a dozen times. We extract der honey by puttin' der frames in a machine

dat whirls dem and throws der honey out, bud leaves der comb to be put back in der hives. Dis vay der bees are save much vork, und dey get twice der honey dey used to did. In July already you can do not'ing any more. Der best flowers are past und things are getting dry und der bees can only make what dey need dem-selves."

We were sitting on the post office piazza, and here we were joined just then by a man who was a former resident of the village and had recently arrived for a visit. He accosted my companion and they were soon discussing incidents of the past. Among other things they mentioned cock fights, and the German said, "Eighteen or nineteen years ago dey use to haf a cock fight mos' every Sunday, but I didn't see him now for a long time."

When the newcomer moved on, the German happened to turn his eyes toward home and remarked, "I haf now to go to my house. Dere is a peacock from my neighbor dot I can see on der roof. Sometime it vill stay dere all der night and holler; so I vill drive it off."

The peacock belonged on a place that formerly was the home of Don Foster, the feudal lord of the region. He had hundreds of thousands of acres, and sheep and cattle unnumbered, and he set a generous table free to all comers. Indeed, two or three dozen of the villagers were constantly fed at his board and he really supported

60 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"the whole shooting match;" for they did practically no work.

The most exciting period in the village history was that immediately following the acquisition of California by the Americans. To quote a leading citizen, "There was then a band of sixty or seventy disgruntled Mexicans known as 'Manillas' who were a terror to all the region. They had a leader by the name of Basquez who was credited with all sorts of savagery and wild escapades. He delighted to come unexpectedly when a dance was in progress and join in the merry-making and cut the fandango. Then, again, he would dash into a village with all his troop and commence firing. At once there'd be a yell, 'Basquez is in town!' and you'd ought to see the people hide."

"The Manillas sailed in here one day and captured the town, all except Don Foster's house. There's one old man living in Capistrano now who at the time of that raid had a store here. When they broke into his place he crawled under a big basket among some rags and rubbish in a corner. He heard the Mexicans helping themselves to his firearms and nice things, but he kept quiet and as soon as it was night he escaped to Don Foster's. After about a week the Manillas got news that the sheriff was comin' with a posse from Los Angeles to punish them, and they went and bushwhacked him and killed all but one man. The sheriff

made a brave fight, and as he lay dying he kept firing his pistol at the fellows as long as he could hold it.

"In a short time another and bigger posse was gathered. Then the Mexicans scattered, but within a few months they'd nearly all been hunted down. When one was caught there were no legal proceedings. He was just hung to a sycamore tree, or stood up against an adobe wall and shot. Last of all they waylaid Basquez and shot him all to pieces.

"This was a much bigger place years ago. In 1870 there were nearly two thousand inhabitants. Now there are less than four hundred. But in those days they were practically all Mexicans and Indians, and they didn't work any more than was necessary to exist. A few watermelons and a sack or two of beans will suffice a Mexican family for a year. They live from hand to mouth, and are content to half starve rather than exert themselves. Why, an energetic American will raise a crop of walnuts and clear in a single season four or five thousand dollars, which is more than a Mexican would clear in four or five thousand years.

"Most of the Indians have drifted off to the reservations to get the benefit of Uncle Sam's coddling. We've managed to pauperize nearly the whole race. If someone else will support them they quit doing anything for themselves and are just loafers. As for the Mexicans they were never reconciled to the change of government,

62 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

and when there come a mining excitement down in their home country many of them went there and never returned. In spite of the decrease of numbers we really get more out of the land than ever before. Nevertheless there's plenty of laziness still. Work is plenty and men can earn a dollar and a half a day; but if they take a job they soon are tired or get too much money and lay off. A Mexican with five dollars will spend it like a lord. He is very apt to get drunk on Saturday night, and you never know whether he will be back to his work Monday morning or not. Some families are so shiftless we are obliged to support 'em. The county allows such from five to ten dollars a month. But they don't consider themselves indigents. They are, rather, indignants. We have no paupers. They call themselves 'pensioners' and think it an honor to get public aid."

English walnut growing had chief place among the local industries, and there were a number of extensive groves. The trees spread out like apple trees, but have a smooth light-gray bark. In the walnut harvest-time the school closes for six weeks to give the children a chance to help gather the crop. Some of the nuts fall of themselves, but a large proportion are thrashed off with poles. Often the poles have a hook on the end and by their aid the branches are shaken. The ground is free from weeds and has been gone over with a

smoother so that the picking up is easy. A sack is the usual receptacle, but the women use their aprons. The nuts are spread on big racks to dry, where they are stirred once in a while with a garden rake. In two days of clear warm weather they are ready to ship.

There were a number of the great slatted drying benches in a yard back of my hotel. A few nuts were still left on the frames, and I often loitered there and feasted. If I chose I could supplement the nuts with oranges picked from trees in the garden. The hotel was an old-time stage-route tavern—a big, long two-story building with a piazza and balcony on both front and rear. I had to go upstairs outside and walk along the balcony to get to my room, which was a rather bare and shabby apartment, with a bed that had two boxes under it to prop up the slats. "We had a heavy-weight sleeping in your bed last night," explained the landlord, "and he broke through."

Behind the hotel were all sorts of whitewashed barns and sheds and shacks, including a kitchen and dining-room which were under a roof by themselves. Suspended from a full-foliaged pepper tree was a framework box covered with fly-netting. This served for a refrigerator. Among the various lodgers at the hotel when I arrived were three men who were driving a couple of wagons to San Diego. They had been stopping four days on account of rains that had flooded

66 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

north, met here at midnight, and we always had hot coffee ready for persons that wanted it. You've noticed how the village people go and hang around the depot to see the trains come in. Well, they used to gather at our hotel just as thick to see those midnight stages arrive. The building of the railroad made a great sensation in the town. When the first engine poked her nose in sight a good many of the people fled to their homes and buried themselves under the bed-clothes. It was weeks before some of 'em would come out of their rooms, and there's those here today that you could no more get on a train than you could get them to fly. If they have to go to Santa Ana, twenty-five miles away, they'll squat in the back end of a lumber wagon and jolt along that fashion rather than trust themselves to the train.

"This was a rough town in the old days. Behind the counter in our store we had a pistol every few feet to be ready for emergencies. We ran a bar in connection with the store, and one day an Indian come in and wanted liquor. He was drunk already, and I told him he couldn't have any more. That didn't suit him and he drew a knife on me. I picked up a pistol and gave him a welt with the butt that laid him flat on his back. Then I took him by the heels and dragged him out into the street. I thought he was dead, but pretty soon he drew up first one foot and then the other. After

—
—
—



An Indian family

that he tried to sit up, but he'd roll over back on the ground. At last, however, he made out to crawl away.

"Papa had almost the same experience with a Mexican. The fellow stooped down and took from his bootleg a knife eighteen inches long and sharpened on both edges. But while he was stooping papa got a couple of pistols and poked 'em into his face as he looked up and said, 'You give me that knife or I'll blow the top of your head off.'

"'Boss, don't shoot,' the fellow said, and he laid down the knife.

"'I'm goin' to take that knife up to Los Angeles,' papa told him, 'and leave it and your name with the sheriff, and the next time you don't behave they'll come down here and kill you.'

"The Mexican was scared. 'Don't do that, boss,' he begged. 'You give me back my knife, and I'll work for you as long as you want.'

"So finally papa give him the knife, and after that the Mexican was his best friend. There was nothing the fellow wouldn't do for him.

"You ought to be here the last day of Lent—Judas Day, we call it. The night before, it is customary for the Mexicans to ransack the village and steal buggies and tools and anything they can carry off, and they make a big pile of all this plunder just outside the fence in front of the old Mission. Then they take a worn-out

68 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

suit of clothes and stuff it full of weeds and stick it up on top of the pile, and that is Judas. Next they get an old dress and stuff that full of weeds and set it up side of Judas to represent his wife. In the morning when we wake up we find all the vehicles and loose things that were around our yards stacked up over by the Mission, with those two scarecrow figures on top. But the best of the performance comes in the afternoon when the Mexicans bring to the village two half-wild bulls from the hills. They tie Judas to one, and Judas's wife to the other and chase the creatures up and down the street till the two figures are torn to tatters.

"There was one Judas Day a tramp come to town, and he stopped at the store and bought a couple of dozen eggs. As he was goin' out of the door carryin' the eggs in a bucket papa says to him, 'They're just turnin' the bulls loose out there, and you'd better wait a while.'

"But he said he was in a hurry and he wouldn't stop. We watched him, and about the time he got in the middle of the street one of the bulls come tearin' along and hits him in the seat of the pants. He went one way and his eggs went another, and that would have been the end of him if the vaqueros hadn't galloped to his rescue. He was mad and he went to Judge Bacon's office and said, 'I want to have these fellows out here arrested. They've been lettin' wild and vicious animals

loose in the street and I've been knocked down, and two dozen eggs I'd just bought are all smashed.'

" 'Well,' the Judge said, 'I don't like to arrest these men. This is an annual celebration, and the men themselves didn't do the damage. If anyone is to be arrested it ought to be the bull.'

" 'I don't care who or what it is you arrest,' the tramp said; 'I want justice done.'

" 'Don't bother me any longer,' the Judge said, and he pulled out a dollar. 'Here, take this and go buy some more eggs,' said he.

"So the fellow left satisfied."

The traveller sitting beside the landlord now got down off the counter and stretched himself. "Who was the man that was here to dinner and went away just afterward on the train?" he inquired.

"It was a doctor," the landlord replied. "He had some thought of settling here; but I told him he'd starve to death. You see the people avoid callin' a doctor till the sick person has one foot in the grave and the other following after. The old women think they can cure most anyone with herbs and weeds, and they keep dosing the sick person till he's nearly dead. Then if the doctor can pull him through things are all right; but if the doctor has his patient die on him they'll never pay for his services.

70 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

“Whenever there’s a death, whether it is day or night, the first thing that is done is to make a run for the Mission to toll the bells. They toll the two big ones for a grown person and the two little ones for a child. The bells toll for ten minutes, and all the friends and relatives start for the house of mourning—get up out of their beds to go, if it is night. The corpse is dressed in what had been the deceased’s best clothes and is put on a table, and candles are lighted and set about on the table, and outside on the porch. When all this has been done the company kneel and sing a hymn. Each new arrival who comes later kneels by the body and says a prayer, and some of the women are praying pretty constantly. A crowd is hanging around all the time till after the funeral.

“On the day of the death, or the one following, some of the men go up to the cemetery to dig the grave; but they have a big demijohn of wine with them, and they’re sure to quit when they’ve got down about three feet. The next night there is a wake and a feast. It is the fashion to eat, drink and be merry and fight. If the night is cool the men and boys build a fire outside which they gather around. By three or four in the morning they are ready to scrap. They are full of their cheap wine then, and it don’t require much to stir their anger.

“The morning after the wake, at ten o’clock, the bell

begins to toll for the funeral and the grave-diggers hustle off to finish their work. An hour later the funeral takes place. The coffin is usually an ordinary box made in the village and covered with black cloth for an adult, white for a child. On the cloth are fastened many flowers, and crosses and other figures made out of tissue and gold papers. The coffin is carried on men's shoulders to the church where the people sing a hymn and then go to the grave bearing the coffin in relays. At the cemetery they sing again, and recite a prayer. Lastly the body is lowered into the grave and every man, woman and child tosses in a handful of dirt."

For twenty-five dollars a family can have a priest conduct the funeral, and while he goes through the sacred rites, the coffin reposes on a table in the church. For fifty dollars a more elaborate service can be had, and the coffin rests on two tables, one placed on the other, while for seventy-five dollars the coffin has three tables beneath and the priest puts on his full robes, swings the censer, brings forth the silver candlesticks and makes the ceremony superlatively impressive.

Weddings take place at the church at high noon, and the rest of the day and the night till broad daylight is spent in feasting and dancing and in eating a barbecued beef.

74 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

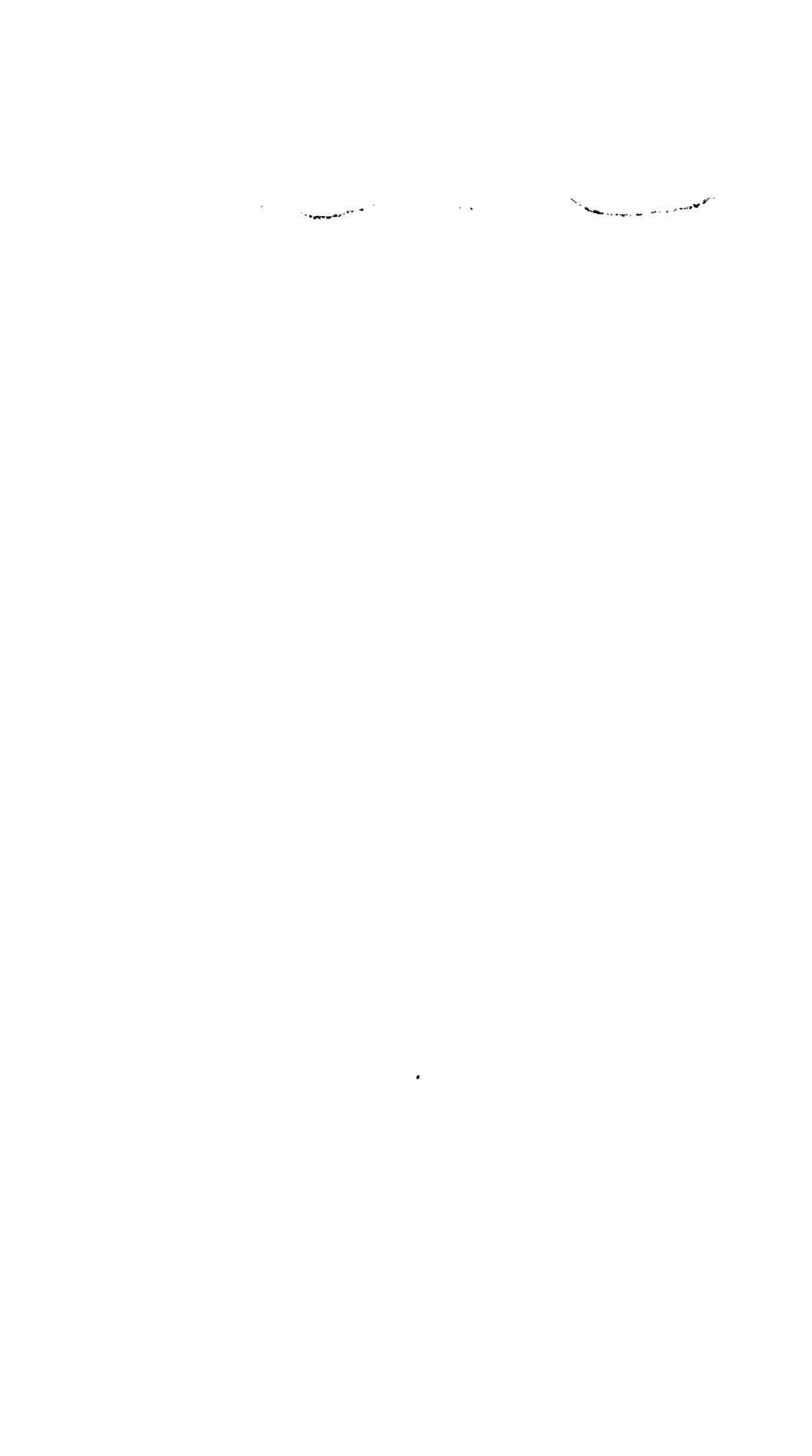
Indians, and various combinations of the races. The dark-skinned children are as a whole lazy and unreliable. They would as soon tell an untruth as not, if it will be accepted. As one man said, "They are like a Chinaman—if he steals and is found out, his act is a sin. Otherwise, he esteems his dishonesty a virtue."

Many of the children have only a vague understanding of English, and this makes their progress in school doubly slow. The building and its surroundings and the two teachers were all that could be desired. A generation ago the place had no school, but one day a New England resident of the village stumbled on the fact that they could get money from the state for educational purposes. This man was the local Justice of the Peace, and known as Judge Bacon. "The people here didn't want to learn anything," said one of the early settlers in telling me the story, "and if a school of the usual sort had been established they wouldn't have attended. They'd heard of such a thing as a public school, but they didn't really know what it was. Why, these billy-goats had the idea it was a sort of institution to make Protestants out of 'em. To get around that snag Bacon went to the padre and asked him to start the school and teach it himself in his little rooms at the old Mission.

"Well, the padre couldn't spell one syllable of English, but Bacon got him to undertake the job, and



On the porch at the village store



dug up a diploma from somewhere allowing him to accept the position. The children came, and he kept along and kept along for a year or so. Most of the school conversation was in the Spanish language, and what was learned didn't amount to much, but it was a start and about the only way a school here could start. However, at the end of a year Bacon persuaded the padre that teaching school was beneath the dignity of a Catholic priest and fixed things so the priest was authorized to hire a nice young lady to take his place. He got one and she taught about three months, when we had a horse race here and some feller came along and made love to her. The result was she ran away with him, and gad! we've never seen her since.

"The school was Bacon's hobby, and he got a building put up and afterward painted it himself—spent three weeks at the job. He laid out the grounds around with the notion of having a sort of park, and he urged that there should be put on the post at each corner of the fence a big globe having the entire world mapped on it. Then, inside, on an arch over the teacher's alcove he wanted a motto painted—'The poorest child may tread the classic halls of yore.' But there were two other trustees, and we wouldn't agree to these things. We didn't see much sense to 'the classic halls of yore,' and were afraid it would only get us laughed at. So,

76 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

instead, we finally had an eagle and some stars painted on the arch.

"Bacon knew how to read and write, but that was about the extent of his book learning. He was one of the argonauts of '49. He made money in mines and then he invested in cattle here. His home was an old adobe without a floor, but he was rich—oh, heavens! he had money galore. As soon as he got the school building done he put in a seventy-five dollar chandelier to light up so they could have dances. He paid for it—plunked up every nickel himself, and he furnished the oil, and he hired a dancing master to come from Los Angeles. They had a dance every Wednesday night. One day he says to a mother, 'Why wasn't your girl there last time?'

"'She can't go no more,' the mother says. 'She's just wearin' out her Sunday gaiters on the floor there, and I can't have it.'

"'Buy her a pair of gaiters, and I'll pay for 'em,' says he; and after that he had to buy gaiters for every girl in town, you bet-cher!

"In fact he got into the habit of buying anything the girls said they wanted for the dancing. But after a while they carried matters a little too far. I remember how he called on me and said, 'One of my best dancers that lives down here on the lane has balked.'

"'What has she balked for?' I asked.

" 'Well,' he replies, 'she says she's got no corsets. Now I've give them girls calico frocks and shoes and lots of things, but I've got to draw the line somewhere, and I won't give 'em corsets.'

"After that the weekly dance ran down. Then pretty soon the idea struck him he'd like to learn music. So he sent to Philadelphia for instruments to fit out a brass band, and he got the finest that money could buy. He distributed them among a lot of old pickles of his caliber, but I told him he'd forgot one thing—'Whoever heard of a brass band without a banjo?' I said.

"At once he telegraphed to have a banjo sent regardless of expense. Those old stiffnesses he picked out for members of the band knew no more about music than a dog does about his grandfather; but they went to practising in a room here in the town and kept at it till the neighbors fired 'em out. Then they made their headquarters off a couple of miles on a sheep ranch where the coyotes were in the habit of gathering to serenade the ranch dwellers. They petered out after a while. The only fellow among them who pretended to do real well was the man with the bass drum. 'Oh, yes,' he'd say, 'I'm gettin' along first rate. All I have to do is to draw off once in a while and give her a devil of a whack!'

"Bacon was an old resident when I came, and he's been long dead. It was his habit every time he wanted

78 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

to go away anywhere to buy two or three white shirts. When he'd worn 'em he'd chuck 'em in a closet and never bother with 'em again. After his death, when things was bein' settled up, we come across all that big heap of white shirts, and we threw 'em outside. The result was that every Mexican in the place wore a white shirt for the next few months."

NOTE.—Capistrano is not a tourist resort, and its hotel accommodations are poor; yet this lack is not without certain picturesque compensations. The village is one of the quaintest, its setting among the hills is charming, and it has the most imposing and beautiful Mission ruin in California. No traveller who goes to San Diego can afford to miss visiting the place, if only to stop off from one train and go on by the next. The outlying sections of the village where the Indians and poorer inhabitants dwell should not be neglected; and it would be well to visit the wild, abrupt coast. This is close at hand and has an added interest because of the adventurous incidents which Dana in his "Two Years Before the Mast" describes as occurring in his experience there.



The vineclad verandah of an old Spanish home



IV

SPRING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

ONE of my longest stops was at a private house well out in a suburban district of Los Angeles. From the window of my room I looked forth on a world luxuriantly green and brightened with blossoms in marvelous profusion. To add to the pleasure of all this, birds were plentiful, and, in particular, there was a mocking-bird that had a habit of perching not far away and piping and trilling with rare ardor and eloquence. Several palms, a magnolia and some camphor trees grew in front of the house, and behind it were orange, fig, peach and other fruit trees. The entire region was much like a park, so carefully were the orchards kept, and so abounding were the cultivated flowers and shrubs. The surroundings of the finer dwellings were little short of perfection, and there was never any rawness due to waiting for nature to give them a proper setting, even about the newer homes. Things grow so quickly and respond so readily to man's training that a home almost at once nestles in

80 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

flowers and vines and foliage that give it repose and charm.

The story goes that the climate is so favoring you can plant toothpicks one day, and the next morning find them grown into tall trees that can be cut and sold for telegraph poles. In sober fact, the nearest approach to this is the growth made by the blue gum, a species of eucalyptus. Aside from fruit trees, no trees in Southern California are so conspicuous and abundant. A blue gum will send up a shoot twenty feet tall in a twelve-month; and in Australia, its home land, it attains a mature height of three hundred feet. The Californians usually cut their blue gums down every few years, and sprouts are allowed to start from the stump. "Our trees here don't know when they are dead," I was informed; "for no matter how little is left when the blue gums are chopped off they will at once take a new start as vigorous as ever. Why, a small patch of blue gums will keep a family in wood."

Throughout California, no matter where one wanders, mountains are always in sight glorifying every landscape. Where I then was I could see a series of heights close at hand, lofty and rugged. During the cooler months the clouds love to linger about their summits and they often whiten over with snow; but no snow falls in the vale, though there are sometimes touches of frost. Things continue green and blossoms are profuse

throughout the winter, and there is a gradual increase of color and fresh growth until high tide is reached in April. Then water is no longer so abundant, and presently the flowers go to seed and the grass withers, and except where there is irrigation the face of the earth is sere and sober. Thus it remains till late autumn when the reviving showers awaken the dull fields and roadsides and pastures to life.

The summer heat is at times excessive; yet it is a dry heat that does not carry with it a sweltering discomfort. What is far worse are the dust storms. In some sections these are frequent, and they are experienced occasionally even in Los Angeles. The dust fills the air like a fog and penetrates the houses and covers everything. Moreover, it irritates the throat and makes one constantly thirsty. Out on the desert, the wind, besides raising the dust, whirls the sand through the air, and sand-drifts gather in the lee of all obstructions. One man told me about an experience of his in a desert sand-storm in a top buggy. "The dusty wind had been blowing all day and night," said he, "and then let up. I'd been waiting for that and I started, but it had only quit to get a fresh hold and it soon blowed like the mischief again. The sand cut my face and the alkali in it made the tears run. Pretty soon my buggy blew over; but I got it right side up again and went on. A little farther along it capsized once more, and this time the top blew

82 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

off and went bounding away out of sight. The storm was so blinding I couldn't see a thing ten feet distant, and I'd been troubled a good deal to keep in the road because the wind was so fierce it would pull on the reins and get the horse out of the beaten track. So in making a new start I just tied the reins to the harness. Then I got into my wrecked buggy and let the horse find its own way home."

Evidently the California summer is not in some respects all it might be, and the winter also has its failings, though of a different sort. In a Chicago railway station, on my way from the East, I overheard an Ohio woman who was returning from a visit to the Pacific Coast discoursing on its weather to a chance acquaintance. Her voice was hoarse with a severe cold. "I've never seen worse fog anywhere," said she; "and the tourists were all kicking about it. I wasn't comfortably warm half the time, and I had to wear jis as heavy furs as at home. The houses ain't fixed to heat. They don't have stoves except in their kitchens. So you can only sit around and shiver. Even in summer the nights are chilly, no matter how hot the day has been. You have to be careful not to let in too much of that night air or you'll ketch your death of cold. I've never minded the winter in Ohio half as much as I did this winter out there. Then, too, I've always been used to livin' at home, and though the grub was good

I got tired of hotel cookin'. Of course, there's wonderful things to see, and all that, and I was enjoying myself pretty well until I struck Los Angeles where I got this awful cold. I didn't meet any people there but jis had colds, and I heard a lot of tourists sayin' they wouldn't live there if you'd give 'em the finest house in the city. It seemed like I was never goin' to get over my cold, and I said, 'Ohio is good enough for me. I can die as well there as out here;' and now that I'm most back I'm so glad I don't know what to do."

No doubt her experience was in some respects abnormal. The season was an unusually wet one, and I witnessed several astonishing downpours when torrents brown with sediment flowed in every roadside gutter, and some of the streets were a-wash from curb to curb. The worst flooded ones could only be crossed by wading in water a foot or more deep. Often boards or pieces of timber were laid across the gutter streams to serve as makeshift bridges.

The uncommon wetness of the season was attributed by some people to the magic of a professional rain-maker. The previous year had been dry, and he contracted to bring rain by a certain date. Then he betook himself to a mountain-top; but what mysterious rites he performed in his efforts to produce rain no one knows. The desired result failed to materialize until two days after the time set, and for this reason payment was

84 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

refused. The rainmaker, however, had his revenge by drenching the country at frequent intervals, and in some sections there were disastrous floods. He declared he would not desist until he was paid. Thus urged, his employers finally turned over the money, and the torrential rains more or less promptly ceased.

Probably the most delightful excursion that can be made from Los Angeles is to the island of Santa Catalina, twenty-five miles off the coast. When first discovered the island was thickly populated by savages, and later it was frequented by pirates who preyed on the rich galleons in the Philippine trade. Now it is a pleasure resort that attracts multitudes of visitors, and its single village is a crowded settlement of hotels and shops and numerous little cottages huddled in a narrow valley basin. Thence you look forth on a crescent beach with wave-torn bluffs on either side reaching out into the sea. In all its length of twenty miles and its width of from two to nine, the island is a chaos of steep hills and mountains, furrowed with deep canyons and having many rugged precipices. The loftiest height is Black Jack which rises twenty-five hundred feet above the sea level. Most of the slopes are grassed over, and thousands of sheep find pasturage on them. You see the paths of the grazing flocks everywhere winding along the inclines, and often see the sheep themselves or hear their bleating. Off in the middle of the island

The cliffs of Santa Catalina



is a farmhouse where the caretakers of the flocks live, but otherwise human life is confined to the neighborhood of the village of the pleasure-seekers.

No matter whither I wandered I found a constant succession of glens and ridges clothed with scattered bushes and thorny clumps of cacti, and one can judge of the country inland by the fact that two young men who had lived in Santa Catalina for years recently lost themselves while coming from the west shore eight miles distant. A fog bewildered them, and one gave up with heart trouble or whiskey, and the other went on alone. Night came, and the wanderer stumbled about in the darkness all to no purpose. It was afternoon of the next day when he reached the village. Then search parties started to find his companion, but he was not where he had been left, and it was two days later that they came across him in a remote part of the island trying to find his way back to civilization.

The showers that every now and then trailed over the uplands and down into the vales were full of vague mystery. There was mystery too in the gray old ocean always pounding along the shore, and in the drift of sunlight and shadow across its sober expanse. I had one experience that seemed to argue that this poetic quality as evinced by nature had a marked influence on the island dwellers and made them poetic also. The first night at my hotel I was awakened early in the

86 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

morning by voices under my room. Evidently the floor was thin and I was over the dining room. A waiter was giving his comrades some advice and it was in rhyme, as follows:

“Mary Ann was very good;
She always did the best she could.
Now children be like Mary Ann,
And do the very best you can.”

A mile or two back from the village up a canyon lived an old hermit who had a chicken ranch. Any farm or country home with land attached, even if there is no more than a garden patch, is a “ranch” in California. I called on the hermit one day. His house was of the shanty order standing in the midst of a plot of ground which he had palisaded with a lath fence against his marauding fowls. Besides chickens he had hundreds of pigeons and a few ducks and turkeys. For closer companionship he kept a couple of handsome collies, and when the sheep from the hills came down around his place, the dogs drove them back.

“I’ve been on Santa Catalina twenty years,” said he. “It was just beginnin’ to be a resort when I got here. There was one small hotel and a few boarding houses, and often more people would come than they could accommodate. Then a good many would have to sleep on the beach. Our summer weather is all right so they didn’t suffer from damp or cold; but they did



Comrades



sometimes get into trouble with the sand fleas. We got fleas here pretty near as big as a grain of wheat, you bet!"

The hermit had a number of flourishing fig and peach trees, and was starting some grapevines. I noticed several rank-growing plants I thought looked like tobacco. "That's what they are," said he. "One day an Irishman from Los Angeles called on me and he saw a chicken pickin' at itself, and he caught it and looked to see what was the matter. He found some mites, and he says, 'What little tej'ous things are these?'

"I told him, and said I could get rid of them if I had some tobacco leaves. Well, the next time he come he brought a packet of tobacco seed, and he said, 'You raise some tobacco and you use it on your chickens. If you don't I'll kill you.'

"It grows very good here. If you have water you can grow most anything in this soil except greenbacks. Would you like to see our island foxes? They're a sort you don't find on the mainland. I caught one last night in that box over there. I've heared him a-howlin' around for a week, and he got three chickens o' mine. These foxes make nice pets and I s'pose I've caught as many as four hundred and sold them at a dollar apiece."

We went to the box, and he tilted it up so that I could see the pretty creature within—evidently a fox, but only half the mainland size. I believe the island contains

88 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

certain other creatures with a peculiar individuality, but it is especially famous for the fish in the surrounding sea. Here is found the leaping tuna, the most active game fish in the world. It is caught with a rod and line, but the line must be many hundreds of feet long, and the fish will tow the boat at racehorse speed from one to twenty miles before it is captured. In weight the tuna sometimes exceeds two hundred pounds.

Nothing afforded me quite so much pleasure while I was at the island as a trip in one of the glass-bottomed boats. The boat could have carried a score, but two young men in addition to myself were the only passengers this time. There was a continuous cushioned seat at the sides and stern, and the oarsman sat in the prow. We had an awning overhead, and in the bottom of the boat were three heavy plates of glass about eighteen inches by three feet, boxed in at the sides. The harbor water was somewhat roiled, but as soon as we got to the cliffs jutting seaward we looked down into fairyland. Even when the depth was fully fifty feet there was scarcely any obscurity, and the sunbeams flickered down almost as through the air onto the gray rocks and the wafting, many-hued sea-plants and the numerous finny inhabitants. How calm everything down there seemed! and with what lazy pleasure the fish moved about in their wonder-world! They were marvelously colored—red and blue, silver and

brown, striped and spotted; and some were pallid little sardines just hatched, and others would weigh four or five pounds.

My fellow voyagers almost exhausted themselves in their expressions of delight. "Well, sir," one would cry, "this is the finest sight I've ever seen in my life."

Then the other would break in with, "Look at this gold fish! Ain't he a pippin! and Tom, here's a jelly fish right under the glass. Gee! ain't that pretty?"

"Dick, get onto this!" exclaims Tom. "Do you see the fish with spots on its back like lamps?"

"That's the electric fish," explained the oarsman, "and in the dark those spots light up the water. Now we are going over a lot of seaweed—ribbons and lace and such. It's the wet drygoods of the ocean, and there's enough right in sight to stock a millinery store."

"I s'pose you can catch fish here at the island any old place," remarked Tom. "My! it looks so nice down in there it would just suit me to camp under water right here for a while."

"Those gold fish take my eye," declared Dick. "I would certainly like to reach down and grab a couple."

"See that seaweed with the violet-colored tips," said Tom. "I tell you that's pretty."

"That was nice all right," agreed Dick; "but look

90 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

at this big purple shell lying on the bottom. I wish I had it."

Just then a little rowboat approached, in which were two fellows in bathing suits, and our oarsman spoke to Dick and said, "If you want that shell one of those chaps will go down and get it for a quarter."

So the other boat was hailed and as soon as the diver had leaned over into our craft to take a look through the glass and locate the shell, down he went, and we could see him swimming like a frog straight for it. When he came up he gave a rap on the glass beneath us, and then he presented the shell, climbed into his boat and put an old coat about his shoulders. "There's a number of such divers here," said our rower as we moved away, "and they make big money—five, ten and twenty dollars a day; but they don't live long. If they ketch a cold it goes right to their lungs."

From Santa Catalina I returned to the mainland and went far back from the coast to a small isolated village. I arrived one warm noontide. A cow was wandering about the wide unshadowed main street, a few teams were hitched to wayside posts before the half dozen stores and saloons, and a rooster was scratching over a gutter rubbish heap. At one end of the street was a patch of grass and a group of trees, and here a prospector's outfit had stopped. The outfit consisted of a canvas-topped wagon loaded with supplies and drawn

by four mules which were eating oats from their nose bags. On either side of the vehicle was a water barrel, and on behind a sheet-iron stove and a bale of hay. The proprietors were three men enroute for Death Valley, and they were prepared to spend a year searching for wealth in that desert region.

On the rear borders of the hamlet stood a tiny church with a barbed-wire fence around it. A preacher came from somewhere and held service every other Sunday. I was told that only two men in the place were church-goers and that the minister considered it was a big day if he had an audience of ten. Beyond the church were park-like pastures with frequent great oaks just putting forth their new foliage. But as a whole the surroundings were either level plains growing in their better parts to wheat and barley, or were low parched hills thinly covered with sagebrush and mesquite.

The village was on the Newhall Ranch, which includes nearly fifty thousand acres. When "old man Newhall" was alive all the suitable land was in wheat, and at the time of harvest he often shipped several trainloads in a day, while now it is something notable to fill half a dozen cars in that time. The village was a busy place then, for not only were two or three score men employed on the ranch, but twice as many more were working some neighboring oil wells, now abandoned. A lanky long-haired youth who had charge of

92 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

one of the drink resorts told me the history of the place while he sat on a battered and initial-carved settee in front of his saloon and contemplatively smoked a cigaret.

"Dad come here twenty odd years ago," he said, "and he's seen this town drop four times and the business go dead. Well, things are not so bad just now as they might be. We get the trade from the ranches for ten to thirty miles around, and they've been makin' some-
thin' the last few years and have money to spend. One while we lived in Los Angeles. That's quite a burg and gettin' bigger all the time. I used to could say nobody could lose me in Los Angeles, but I don't hardly know where I'm at in some parts now."

When I left the village to resume my journeyings it so happened that I was stranded for several hours at a railway junction, a few miles distant, where I had to stay till midnight before I could get a train. One attraction of the waiting-room was a gambling-machine. You put a nickel in a slot, turned a crank and something went buzz inside, and possibly a sum varying from ten cents to two dollars dropped out down below. I saw a number of fellows try it, and two of them used up a quarter each in their efforts, but the machine simply kept what they dropped in and gave back no prizes. The profits of the machine, according to the man in charge of the station lunch counter, were about a dollar a day. He said the thing was against the law and

would not be allowed in the cities, but in small places the law was not enforced.

The lunch man and a friend had a long discussion about the merits of various systems of gambling—cards, craps, roulette and faro bank, and attempted to decide which was “the fairest game in the bunch.” “I’ve tried them all,” said the friend. “Yes, I’ve monkeyed around the gambling tables a good deal. I am naturally lucky, too, and when I win, I win right quick.”

Nevertheless he was at present so hard up he was planning to beat his way on a frieght to some land of promise farther on. He went out, and the lunch man turned to me and said, “There ain’t much use of playin’ against a professional gambler. He ain’t settin’ there for his health, and he’s bound to win oftener’n you are. But a feller knockin’ about always sees ways to make a lot of money if he only had a little pile. It takes too long and requires too much effort to earn and save it. So he tries gambling; and yet if he has luck he always wants more money than he has won, and he won’t stop until he loses it all.

“Some of the worst gambling places are over in Arizona. I went into one town there with fifty bucks (dollars) in my pocket and wearin’ a twenty-eight dollar suit and a new overcoat and shoes, and with a four-dollar grip in my hand. But in three weeks I come away a tramp. Now I’ve made up my mind to

94 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

do different," said he as he prepared a cup of coffee for himself. "I ain't touched my booze for a month, and if I can save seventy-five dollars I'm goin' to start for New England where I come from. I can have more fun with five dollars in Boston than I can with a hundred dollars in these cities out here."

Most likely he would fail in his intention. The Far West is full of human driftwood. Men who have any capacity and industry easily get profitable jobs, but a considerable proportion of such men are constantly roving to new territory, and money doesn't stick to them.

My midnight train carried me to the remarkably fertile country that extends for nearly a hundred miles east of Los Angeles. There you find an endless succession of orange, lemon, apricot, peach and other fruit orchards. Back a little from the route I took through this wonderland, the mountains frowned in purple gloom from beneath a capping of foggy clouds, and wherever a canyon opened from the heights it had shot out over the levels a wide waste of sand and stones that was half overgrown with brush. Such land was furrowed with water-courses that were perfectly dry except just after storms. However, dry water-courses are not confined in California to small streams. There is a saying that the rivers are "bottom upward." That is, the channel is usually a waste of sand, but if you dig down deep enough you are pretty sure to find a seepage

of water. After a storm the dry channels are suddenly filled with rushing torrents that transform the lowlands to shallow ponds, and marshes of mire.

In the region where I then was oranges grow to perfection, but they are raised with scarcely less success in the upper Sacramento valley over five hundred miles to the north. Heat and cold on the coast are a matter of altitude, not latitude, and the wildflowers are a-bloom among the foothills and the valleys in midwinter throughout the entire length of the state. What wonder that California is the great orange center of the world!

With proper care the trees grow very rapidly. They are vigorous and long-lived. For a hundred years they will continue to bear, and an instance is on record in Italy of an orange tree that survived to the age of four centuries. Perhaps no other tree blossoms more regularly and generously, and though sometimes a cold wave does serious local harm, a general failure of the crop is unknown. The trees require little or no pruning back, but the branches have to be thinned out somewhat. To combat the scale pests a good many owners resort to spraying, but the most effective way is to fumigate. The leading varieties of trees only grow about ten feet high and are very compact with branches trailing on the ground. Even the larger species seldom attain over fifteen feet, so that a tent can be put over a tree and the fumigating done very thoroughly. Tents

96 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

enough are used to cover a row, and when that row has been treated they are shifted to the next. It is night work, for the heat of the day and the fumes combined would injure the foliage.

In the early spring one finds much of the land among the orange groves hidden by rank weeds, and by peas purposely grown during the winter and later ploughed under to serve as a fertilizer and to give the soil humus. After the ploughing the land is kept clean, and it is cultivated many times in the months following. The bare brown earth is not a pleasing setting for the evergreen, glossy-foliaged trees, and their appeal to the eye is also hurt by the round, stout solidity and uniformity of shape of the trees themselves.

Picking begins in time to ship for Thanksgiving use, but the early fruit is poor. It is not ripe, and in order to get a good outer color some of it has to be treated to a few days' sweat. This turns a green skin to the proper tint, though the inside may be as sour as a lemon. The picking continues until May, and in the height of the season you can buy excellent windfalls from peddlers on the town streets at "ten cents a bucket," and the bucket holds about eight quarts.

A well-grown orchard, conveniently located, is commonly priced at fifteen hundred to two thousand dollars an acre, though at such figures the native Californians, if they give you a confidential opinion,

say they don't see how any money can be made. It is better to sacrifice something on location, for the investment will be decidedly less. There is great advantage to a prospective purchaser in working in the country a year or two in order to get acquainted with the climate, the soil and crops and methods of marketing. The tenderfoot usually pays high for the place he buys, and often he "comes with a nice little pile and goes back with nothing." Many natives make a business of staying on a place for a while, improving it and then selling at a fancy valuation. That done, they buy some other ranch, which can be had cheap, and repeat the process.

The manipulations that one hears of in connection with the sale of land in the coast country make a very curious story. The real estate agents are persons of an optimistic turn of mind, with a marked ability to tell fairy tales. I heard of one man who was dissatisfied with the place he owned, and he put it in the hands of a firm of agents, to sell while he looked up another home to his liking. Shortly afterward he saw a place advertised by these agents that he felt from the description was exactly the thing he wanted. He went to them, and lo! it was the very one he was trying to sell.

The agents are all eager to get hold of prospective purchasers, and some of the loiterers at the station are likely to be acting in their interest. That old Kansas

98 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

farmer you see chewing tobacco and sitting around in the waiting room is wintering in the vicinity, and he is making a little money by keeping on the lookout for new arrivals, getting acquainted with them, and if they want to buy land he steers them to some real estate firm with which he has an understanding.

Everybody trades in land "on the side," even cheap clerks and servant girls. They can get lots for one dollar down and a dollar a week. But most of the small speculators pay in cash one-fourth of the price and agree to pay the other quarters at six month intervals. They really never intend to make the second payment, but expect the land to advance in value so they can sell out at a good profit before the six months expire. In short, they seldom buy because they want the property for themselves, but simply to await some bigger "sucker" who will take it off their hands at an advance. With prices going up the investors generally make money. On the other hand a drop in values finds a vast number of obligations that cannot be taken care of. The speculators are forced to sell for what they can get, which makes prices tumble still worse and there is a general crash. The preceding inflation has often been so great that it is difficult to estimate what a person has really dropped. "I have lost fifty thousand dollars," said one investor, "and the worst of it is that five hundred dollars of the sum was good money."



Schoolgirls

One real estate agent who talked to me with unusual frankness was a man who had just retired from the business after a ten months' experience. He had come from South Dakota and had made his home in a growing coast city of ten thousand inhabitants. "I have been successful," said he, "but my Godfrey! I didn't feel right. You can't tell the whole truth and make any sales. Southern California is a good place to spend money and a poor place to make it. For some people it's healthy, but for me the winters are too damp and chilly; and yet the natives say you don't need no fire. The fact is, fuel is expensive and most people can't afford it. There's many a family makes one cord of wood last a whole year; but I burned just as much as we did at home in the East."

"A considerable number of widows lived in the town where I was. When a woman had a little money left at her husband's death she'd buy or build a nice-looking house, but if you examined it you'd find it was put up very slight and cheap. Outside there'd be clapboards nailed right to the studding, and inside cheese cloth over lath, and wall paper pasted on the cloth. The place was a summer resort, and for three or four months the lone woman with a house would rent her dwelling and live herself in a tent or shed behind it. The money she received had to support her the year through. So her food was mostly bread and a little fish and tea, with

now and then five cents worth of warm soup bought at a restaurant. All the time she'd put on the appearance of being very well off, though in reality she was poorer than Job's turkey.

"People in the East think that the climate in California is so favorable that they can pay any price for a ranch and make money on whatever they choose to go into, and that there'll be no need of their doing much only to let things grow. The real estate agents encourage that notion. They're the gol-darndest lot I ever saw. They can't talk reasonable, and they never quit their everlasting blowing. You'd think they were fairly crazy about this country. It will almost make a man who knows the situation vomit, the way they talk. Murderation, they've got dodges to beat any Eastern man that ever lived. They always like to take a possible customer to ride to show him around. Crowd him into your rig some way, and then your sale is half made. Otherwise, a rival will take the drive with him and your chance in that quarter is gone. It isn't the habit to exhibit any anxiety to sell. You point out this and that piece of property and talk about what it is suited for and what its future value will probably be, and you're pretty sure to get your man interested.

"Everybody deals in real estate, ministers and all. Some of the ministers get so tangled up they have to leave their pulpits. You have no idee of the state of

Enroute for Death Valley



things. I know one Methodist minister who has done particularly well. When he notices a new man in his congregation he of course takes pains to shake hands and welcome him, and then he asks if he is going to settle. If the man says, 'Yes,' the minister mentions that while he is not in the real estate business he knows of various pieces of property for sale and would be glad to render any assistance he could. You see, the members of his flock place whatever piece of land they want to dispose of in his hands, and he lists it and sells it on a per cent the same as any other agent. But he is supposed by the purchaser to be disinterested, and he talks with the stranger's family, holds prayers with them and keeps them right under his thumb. You can't never persuade the preacher's man away. He's got a dead sure thing, and by and by the sale is made and the rest of us say, 'The parson has landed another man all right.'

"Then there's a kind of agent who has no office or no nothing. He keeps watch of the streets. When he sees strangers standing around in the sun trying to get warm he happens up to 'em and says, 'Kind o' cold this morning.'

"That leads to talk, and if he finds they have some notion of buying property he says, 'Well, I ain't got no property to sell, myself, but there's a friend of mine has just about what you're lookin' for, and I'd be glad to take you around to see it.'

102 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"Darned if he ain't about the best man in town, next to the preacher, to make sales! The strangers perhaps wouldn't go in the door of a real estate office, but they buy of him because they think he has no money interest in making the sale. They may even brag afterward to the real estate men who have offices, and say, 'We bought through him because we didn't want to pay you fellers a commission.'

"Another way to force sales is to employ what they call a 'striker.' Suppose you are trying to sell a ranch. The striker comes in while you are talking with your customer, and you greet him as a person who owns a ranch close by the one you have for sale. You ask him what he'll take for his place, but he won't sell. It's too profitable a property, while all the time the striker hasn't any place at all. One agent in the city I lived in was working to dispose of a tract of land to two ladies, and he represented it would have a very ready sale cut up for house lots, though it was miles beyond where the city was at all built up, and the city wouldn't grow to it in five hundred years. To speak the exact truth it wa'n't worth a cuss. But he tells 'em there's three or four parties after it who are liable to take it any time, and they'd better not delay. So they got the refusal of it for a few days. Before the time was up a striker called on 'em. He'd never shaved and had whiskers all around his face a foot long. You

might say he was from Missouri. He was an old innocent-lookin' feller and made out he was deacon of some church, and he says, 'I understand you've bought that property, and I wanted to know about getting a part of it. I'm willing to give so much for half of it;' and he named a price bigger'n they were goin' to pay for the whole.

"They were all in a flutter, and they said that arrangements were not quite complete, but the property was about to be put on the market by them and he should have first chance. Then they made haste to buy and were the most tickled women in the world, but the man with the whiskers never came again. That old freak would land every victim he got hold of and take their last dollar. I was sorry for those women, but women do make the awfulest breaks in these land trades. They go into speculation head over heels.

"One day a stranger called at my office and told me he'd been in town two weeks and invested five thousand dollars. The tales of the land agents had made him enthusiastic, and he said, 'You people out here are slow. You stand around doing nothing and let us Eastern people make all the money.'

"He was sure he was going to double on his investment within a year, but he was soon ready to sell out at a heavy loss. There's no use talking—you pick up any property we had and it would pretty near burn

104 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

your fingers. That's what it would. But new people were coming in on every train looking for property to invest in; and the papers were praising it up all the time, so that hearing of prices constantly on the rise they'd get in a hurry to buy. But a month was a long time for a place to be out of the market. By then a man was pretty sure to be sick of his bargain. When I made a sale I just checked it with a pencil. I didn't cross off the item; for I'd soon have had my book scratched up and spoiled. In a few weeks the property was bound to go on sale again, and then I'd simply erase the check. You could readily tell when a piece of property had recently changed hands, for there would be some little improvements made on it. That's the only time a man ever had any heart for laying out money and effort on his place.

"The other agents in town got onto me right straddle of my neck for not booming the region more; but I couldn't do it. If a man came to me and I found he had a family of children I would urge him to keep his money and go back where he came from. If he was a single man, or there was only him and his wife, I showed what there was to be had and let him use his own judgment. But, by gosh, I didn't feel right even about that, and now I'm quit of the business."

NOTE.—Los Angeles, the metropolis of Southern California, is naturally the first stopping-place of every tourist who arrives by the

Santa Fé or Southern Pacific. In 1880 this "Town of the Queen of the Angels," as the Spaniards called it, had only eleven thousand inhabitants, but twenty-five years later there were nearly two hundred thousand. It is a modern big city, yet with environs that are peculiarly charming. Here is some of the finest fruit country on the west coast and you find innumerable groves of both orange and lemon trees, and the homes nestle among blossoms and green foliage even in midwinter. Then there is a background of rugged mountain heights, and not far away in the other direction is the sea and the enchanting island of Santa Catalina, reputed to be the greatest fishing-place on earth. Every facility is provided for seeing the towns and villages of the Los Angeles region and for climbing the mountains or going to the wild isle off the coast.

The most famous suburb of Los Angeles is Pasadena. This, too, is a city, but for the most part is a place of homes, each with a setting of velvety turf and full-foliaged trees and flowers. It is a playground of wealth, the winter dwelling-place of a multitude of Eastern people and contains some of the finest residence thoroughfares on this continent. Various other flourishing towns and much of the best cultivated portion of this "Land of the Afternoon" can be glimpsed by taking a day's trip on a railway that makes a long loop back into the interior. Of the towns on this loop that would best repay a special visit I think Riverside and Redlands should have the preference.

The country is least attractive in the parched months of the late summer and early autumn, and is seen at its best in April and May. As compared with the temperature that most of the states east of the Rocky Mountains experience in the colder months, the West Coast climate will be found very genial, but warm clothing, light overcoats, shawls, or convenient wraps which may be used or discarded according to one's needs, are an essential part of the traveller's outfit. The evenings and nights are sure to be cool, and chilling rains are a frequent feature of the winter.

V

SANTA BARBARA AND ITS HISTORIC MISSION

THERE had been rain early in the day, but as my train went northward from Los Angeles the clouds rolled away, and when we came to the seashore the sun was shining from the west in a broad dazzling path of light across the restless waves. Off in the distance were some islands nearly hidden in silvery haze. A series of fine big hills hugged the ocean, and we skirted their bases close to the beach till we reached Santa Barbara where the hills gave place to a wide valley and disclosed a noble range of mountains rising along the east.

The lower portion of the town is a straggling and promiscuous set of buildings, and misses little of being squalid; but as you go farther back, homes of the suburban type become more and more numerous till you find nothing else but handsome cottages and villas hiding amid the semi-tropical luxuriance of blossoms and shrubbery. On a gentle hill at the end of the vale stands the Mission charming the beholder with its



Garden work

simplicity, its size, its imposing situation and its storied age. It is a structure that seems to belong to another realm and another civilization, and the only local buildings at all akin to it are a few lowly adobe houses in the town center, just off the main business street—survivals of the old Spanish village. These are usually whitewashed, and they have broad, tile-floored verandahs with roses, morning-glories or other vines growing along the front. Neither the chill of winter, nor the heat of summer can very well penetrate their massive earthen walls. As one of the dwellers said to me, "It might be August, and the sun no matter how hot, you go in this house, it be cold, nice, good."

He showed me a patch of grapevines trimmed back to the bare stubs, but the green new sprouts were already well started, and he said, "They will have on them fine grapes—good to eat, good to make wine, and the wine is more strong as whiskey. See how these vines is growing. I have all the time to cut them back. He grow fast, queek! You bet you! By gosh, give him a chance and he grow all over the place! That is cactus over there. Prickly pear, I call him. The fruit has many pins on it—what you call them?—thorns. But get them off and the skin off, and the inside is sweet, good."

I asked him the name of a little flowering plant growing underfoot, but he only knew that it was a weed

108 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

which was sometimes used for medicine. "It will keep you well better than the doctor," he continued. "If I be made sick of the stomach I boil it for a drink. Ah! the doctor can not tell what is the trouble inside of you. He get him your money. He don't care whether you die."

I went into one old adobe. It was pretty dismal and dark and bare, and the rafters and roof-boards overhead were black with soot. The two things that most impressed me were the presence of a piano, and a sign hung on the wall that had been painted by some genius of the family and which said, DON'T SPICK IN THE TABLE. The idea of the motto was not to chatter while eating.

In my wanderings about the old part of the town I came across an Irishman converting a wayside blue gum that he had felled, into firewood. The chopper was elderly, tattered and rusty, but in independent circumstances, nevertheless; for he pointed across the road and affirmed that he owned an entire block of land and the various cabins on it, property worth in his say-so fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. He mentioned that he lived over there, and I asked him in which house. He responded that he didn't live in any house, but camped in a wagon which was hidden from view by some intervening buildings.

"Have ye been up to the ould Mission?" he queried, settling himself comfortably on the blue gum log.

"It is an intheresting place to look about, and soom like to go to church there on Sundays. I wint wunst mesilf. A lady who thought a heap of me had invited me to go wid her, and she sat in the front seat. But I stayed near the door; and close by me was a lobby hole or box like a little room built ag'in the wall and I could hear a priest a-muttering in it. Yes, he was in there a-gobbling away like an ould turkey—joost as if the outside wasn't good enough for him and he moost go in there and gobble by himself; and I couldn't understand a word he said, for he didn't speak out plain and brave.

"There was a lot o' prayin' to be did in the church service, and you had to be crossin' yoursilf and pokin' your heart most of the time. But I wasn't coom for that. I was there to listen and look. I couldn't make mooch sinse out of what I heard, because a good deal was in Latin or soom other haythen language. Then there was a feller walkin' around swingin' a thing that smoked—a cincer, they call it, and he was shakin' it this way and that and payin' no sort of attintion to it; and I said to mesilf, 'That feller is no Catholic. He don't care what he's got there, whether it's wather or a kag of beer or what it is.'

"I want ye to notice one place at the Mission particular. Turn off the road that goes up the hill joost beyond the main building and ye will see the ruins of three

110 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

rooms. It's telled me that the ould monks walled up some bad people in there to stay for the rest of their lives. The backmost room was very small and half under the hill, and the opening into it was only a round hole that you had to crawl through on your face and hands. It seems like that was the place for thim that was very bad—the outlawed criminals. The others stayed in the bigger rooms where it was more plisant.

"But whin Fremont coom here he throwed a cannon ball or two at thim rooms, and he let the prisoners loose. He knowed what was there. I niver had thought well of his outfit—coomin' here and raising thunder with the Spanish people, but whin I seen what he done in leaving those prisoners loose I felt different. A man in this town who was in Fremont's army tould me about it, but he has been dead now a matther of five or six years. Ah! the ould padres had been havin' their own way till Fremont coom. They got all the Indians workin' for 'em and were bossin' thim and makin' thim do exactly as they pleased and tellin' thim if they didn't obey they'd be sint to hell sure. So the padres got so rich and proud they didn't hardly want to speak to anyone. Thim prison rooms make a strange-lookin' ruin even yit, and the firrust time I was past the hair fairly stood up on me head at the sight. I thought I would as soon have me coffin made and be put in the ground as be walled in there."



Meditation

Really, the buildings of which he spoke had something to do with the storage and filtering of the old water supply, and there never was any such grim prison as he described. The Mission itself, unlike most of the California Missions, is not a ruin, but is in excellent repair and still the dwelling of the gowned and sandaled monks, as it was a century ago. These monks are so different from ordinary folk in their garments and in the strangely decorative life they lead that it is fascinating to watch them engaged in their various duties. The furniture and all the belongings of the Mission are severely simple, but the great court back of the main building is full of flowers and trees, and its luxuriance contrasts oddly with the severity of the interiors. Throngs of visitors are constantly coming and going. They, however, only have access to certain public portions of the premises, so that those portions where the friars eat and sleep and do their daily tasks in shops and garden and fields repose in almost unbroken calm.

From the Mission I went far up a mountain roadway that for a long distance clung to a hillside well up above a noisy stream coursing along in the wooded hollow. The road was muddy and gullied. Heavy wagons were going up after stone, or returning loaded, and there were many equestrians—ladies, men and children. Santa Barbara is a famous place for horseback expeditions. Nearly everyone rides, even those who before

112 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

they go there never have been on a horse, and all through the day you see the riders, singly, in couples and in squads, gallivanting through the town streets, and meet them on every road and trail for miles around.

The road I was on was bordered by pastures that in places were grassy, but were largely covered with gray-green sagebrush mingled with thickets of chaparral misted over at that season with blue blossoms. In favored spots grew the cactus and clumps of great century plants. When there was open grazing land it was strewn with rocks, and this rocky ground seemed to favor the growth of scattered groves of live oaks. The oaks were wonderfully twisted and distorted, their bark was gray with lichen and they looked as ancient as the rock-strewn hills on which they stood.

At one point I came on a herd of cattle feeding along the brushy roadside, and three boys were watching them. The watchers were playing with a pet cow that was lying down, and which seemed to take a sort of sleepy pleasure in their proceedings. The clothing of the lads was covered with dirt and hairs, for they tumbled about on the ground or leaned on the creature and rubbed it companionably. One boy was milking into his mouth. The oldest of the trio said, "My father gave me this cow when she was a little bit of a calf, and I take care of her. If he tries to milk her he gets kicked, but I can milk her anywhere. Last December

she pretty near died. There was no feed in the pastures, and the cattle was dying all over. We lost quite a few, and this cow got so weak she would tumble down. So we carried feed to her and she got stronger. We watch the cattle here all day, but at noontime take turns going home to dinner. When night comes we drive the cattle into the pasture."

I went on until the foothills began to merge into the rough steeps of the mountains, and then I wandered back to the town.

On my last afternoon in Santa Barbara I again had a talk with the Irishman-of-wealth who lived in a wagon. He was still laboring at the big blue gum, but desisted from his exertion to sit down and chat, as readily as he had before. He was especially eager to know what I thought of the Mission and its monks and their religion. Soon he was relating some of his personal opinions and experiences.

"I'm not mooch stuck on religion mesilf," said he, "and a little church-going lasts me a long time. Wunst my fri'nds tould me I ought to go to confession. So I said I would, and at the church where they tuk me I wint into a little room, and there was two chairs and a priest, and he and me set down. Thin he began moombling along like a drunken man wid a pipe in his mouth. Well, I listened and listened; and as I could make no sinse at all out of his moombling, I said

116 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

vein of what I called white rocks, that now I would call honeycomb quartz—gold bearing. If I broke the rock the pieces would hang together wid the gold in it. Soomtimes I would pick up one o' the gold pebbles, and it seemed so heavy I would toss it up joost to feel it coom down *chuck* in the palm of me hand. If it fell on the ground it would make the doost fly, it was that heavy. Ah, there's plenty of rich ore in Ireland, and what's the matter they don't give the people permission for to mine it? I s'pose if I was to go back there and try to get that gold they'd put me in jail, eh?

"Well, now, I was by the creek another time where there was a deep hole wid a ruffle below it, and in this deep place I see soom thrount. Wan was ahead and the others was following like a lot of dogs running after another, goin' along in rotation. The first thrount had soomthing in its mouth—oh, so shining—joost like sunlight. Pretty soon the thrount dropped it, and the next one picked it up and the rest kept on chasing until he dropped it and another ketched it, and away wid it. Ha-ha-ha-ha! I kept watchin' and by and by I got hold o' the shining thing—and what was it but a di'mond. I didn't know thin, though, what it was, and I ran home and showed it to me mother and said, 'Oh, look what a nice little rock I got!'

But she let the gintleman's daughter take it, and the young lady put it in a ring. I worked at her house whin



The artist

I got older, and she would show me the ring wid the di'mond in it and make it flash the light over on the wall, and she would tell how she had the value of so much wealth on her finger. That's the way people have cheated me all me life—because I would niver grab for anything.

"Perhaps not ieveryone would have seen what I seen. Soom of us are odd from the balance of the people. I have tould you about the gold and the di'mond, but the most wonderful thing in me life is that I have seen the fairies. Me father seen 'em too, and he said *his* father did before him; and so I suppose have all the ginerations in our family from the commincement of the woruld right down. I remember the first time I seen 'em I was a boy out in the pasture. I was all alone, and I seen forty or fifty little men goin' along, and they were no more than three feet high. They wore stove-pipe hats and bobtail coats and knee-breeches, and each had a big long pipe in his mouth, and they stood up so straight and plump and nice it was a pleasure to look at 'em. Ye see they was dhressed in the rael ould-time Irish costume. I have seen the Scotch costume and the other national costumes, and soom are good enough, and soom are crazy-like, but none are equal to the Irish. I tell you an Irishman in that ould dhress looked like a smart, intelligent, brave man. Ivery wan o' those fairy men carried a blackthorn stick. Ah, how much the

118 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

ould Irish did think o' their blackthorns! How they did bile 'em in hot wather and rub them wid ile, and hang them up in the chimney to get seasoned and smoked, and they always carried them to protict thim-silves when they wint to a fair.

"Well, there was a bird in Ireland used to coom and sing to me—a little black bird like wan o' these pewees. Whin I took shipping for this countrry I felt very bad to be leavin' me little bird. I said, 'Oh, I'm so sorry! I'm afraid I shall lose me luck.'

"But after we was about ten days out I looked back, and there I saw me little pewee coomin', and he flew like he was awful tired. Finally he caught up wid us and lit on the topmast, and there he stayed the rest of the day. The next morning he was down on the first yard, and the day after that he was on the bulwarks. I was on the promenade poop forward, and I spoke to him, and he coom and hopped about and e't soom of a piece of bread I had, and then he hollered, 'Pe-wee-wee-wee!' and flew back up in the riggin'.

"After a while I wint down below, and whin I coom up again I couldn't see him at all any more. But he visits me lots o' times since I been in this countrry. It's the same bird, wid the same motions and song my little bird in Ireland had. I could tell him from any other bird. He cooms and gives me warnin' if soom-thin' is goin' to go bad; and maybe, now and then he

will appear as a cow. There was wunst I had a little bit of a log cabin down the coast a few miles, and there was a good stout fince around it, and barley a-growin' in the yard. Well, I was settin' in me cabin wan day whin a cow stuck her head in the door and laughed joost like a Christian. 'How did you get inside my fince?' I said. 'It's destroyin' my barley, ye are.'

"So I drove her out of the gate, and I was astonished she wint so quick and peaceable, and not ugly and conniptious like most cows. Thin I looked at the barley, but it was not hurt at all. Another day I found the cow rubbin' herself against the side of my little house, and I drove her off across the fields till she passed around soom bushes, and the next minute she coom in sight and a calf wid her. She passed behind soom more bushes, and as soon as she appeared again there was half a dozen more cows wid her. Ha-ha-ha-ha! I picked up a rock to throw at her, but she looked me such a look I did not throw. 'That's the ould fairies,' I said, and I asked forgiveness.

"The cow kept foolin' wid me for about a month. I wa'n't feelin' well, and I was gettin' worse. 'Oh,' I thought, 'I'm goin' to die!'

"I took a walk out wan day, and I seen that cow by the side of the road, and I stopped and had a good look at her. 'What a fine cow!' I says, 'and how full your bag is wid milk! I niver noticed that before. I will

bring a bucket and milk you and have soom bread and milk to eat.'

"So I got the bucket and kneeled down to milk, but the cow began to hitch around and would not stand still, and I said, 'If you don't quit that I'll hit you wid the bucket.'

"She lifted up wan hind foot like she was goin' to kick, and she turned her head around and looked at me as if she was human and had sinse. I was scared and I started to escape into a near field. Well, now thin, as I was goin' over the fince I looked back and there was no cow to be seen. She'd gone out of sight while I was takin' three steps.

"The next evening I was out again, and there was the cow in the road, and the milk was runnin' out of her bag and down the road in a regular stream to the gulch. I hurried and brought me bucket and caught about two inches in the bottom of it. Thin I carried it to the house and had soom bread and milk, and that milk was delicious, palatable, fine. It was the best I iver tasted. It made another man of me. I could feel the change at wunst. It braced me up and I was well.

"I had soom milk left and I thought I would let it stay in the bucket and have it in the morning, but when morning came and I looked in the bucket I saw nothing but wather there. At noon I looked in again and the bucket was dry. Now, what do you call that ?



At work in a home yard

It was the fairies all the same havin' fun wid me. I was sick and they cured me. They knowed it was no bother to do it.

"The fairies had a hand too in my gettin' this block of land I own. They showed me the picture of it before I left Ireland, and the minute I set eyes on it I was certain it was what they intinded I should have. Thin, wan time here, the fairies tould me I could have great herds of cattle or sheep or pigs. 'Whatever kind of animals ye want ye can have,' they said; and I chose the cattle, and no sooner did I say the word than up coom a band of cattle out of the ground—hoondreds av thim. 'There they are,' the fairies said, 'and in twenty years thim will be yours, and the ranch they're on, if ye want them.'

"Well, they were on a ranch where a lady named Hale lived, and ivery cow had two calves a year, and things wint along very prosperous. The fairies was workin' on the lady, too, and she had her eye on me, and she knew me fairy cows was on her ranch, and that I was joost givin' up to her the twenty years' use av thim. So whin the time was gone, she cooms and wants me to marry her; but I thought I'd go along on me own hook. Oh, this is a very peculiar sort of a woruld—this is!"

My comrade rose and chopped a few strokes, but the day was drawing to an end. Some fellow-laborers

122 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

passed on the street and shouted a greeting to him and he concluded to stop work. He put on his vest and coat, took up his axe and saw and started for home. I went with him, and we walked around into the lot where, back of a neighbor's shed, he had his queer habitation. It was a big old lumber wagon with a piece of canvas spread from the high seat down toward the back. The shelter afforded was poor and cramped. A few other belongings were scattered about in the grass and there was a wreck of a stove that could still be made to serve after a fashion. But then, though to me these household effects seemed meagre and shabby, I do not know that they so impressed the owner. He had the gift of imagination; and beautiful as is nature in that region, and delightful as is the ancient Mission, there is nothing in my visit I remember with more pleasure than this man with his visions of realms beyond my ken.

NOTE.—Santa Barbara is one of the most attractive towns in California, beautiful in its surrounding scenery, not so large as to be dominated by commercialism, nor so small as to be rude and lacking in comfortable accommodations. The old survives amid the new, and you can even yet find buildings and life that have the characteristics of the time of Spanish rule. Here is the best preserved of all the old Missions. Every Mission is worth seeing, but Santa Barbara has one where the gowned and sandaled monks still dwell and labor.

The chief outdoor pleasures for the sojourner here are coaching, cross-country horseback riding, fishing and hunting. Most visitors would be interested to read the account of early days in Santa Barbara to be found in Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast." This book, in fact, entertainingly describes the aspect and customs of every old sea town from San Francisco to San Diego.

VI

A VALE OF PLENTY

CALIFORNIA has a number of valleys that are at the same time remarkable for their great size and their productive capacity, but the San Joaquin excels any of the others. A few decades ago it was not esteemed of much use except for grazing, though certain parts would grow excellent crops of wheat; but irrigation has changed all this, and as you pass through it on the train you marvel at the seemingly endless succession of thriving fields and orchards.

My first day in the valley was a Sunday spent at a little village consisting mostly of a hotel and a few stores and saloons facing the railway. Round about was a vast level extending for miles in every direction, and nearly all of it green with wheat. At long intervals, amid this green sea could be discerned a small huddle of buildings where there was a ranch house. It was one of the regions in which, when the grain ripens, a harvester is used that is drawn by thirty-six mules or horses, and that cuts off the heads of the wheat, threshes out the grain and drops it in sacks behind. Forty acres

will be covered daily on good ground and the season lasts three months. After the harvester has finished, the cattle are turned onto the land and they feed on the stubble and trample it so it can be ploughed under.

For an hour or two in the morning I sat on the hotel piazza a little way from a group of men gathered near the door of the odorous barroom. The day was quiet and warm. The flies buzzed, and some sparrows chattered noisily and flitted about with bits of straw and bark and string for their nest-building beneath the cornice of the piazza. A few teams were hitched to railings under the umbrella trees along the sidewalk, and there were occasional passers on the highway. One of these passers was a man driving two burros laden with packs. The creatures walked slowly and patiently and he followed behind. He was from some mine, and all his outfit and belongings were on the donkeys. A boy on horseback rode up in front of the hotel and borrowed the proprietor's gun that he might do a little hunting. A tramp came along and wanted something to eat, and he was set at work chopping wood. Except for him it was a day of loafing and recreation.

The largest group of loiterers gathered in front of the post office to watch or participate in a game of marbles. The players were young men and boys. A little fellow named Danny was getting the advantage

128 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

It was the rainy season, and we had several heavy downpours that night which left the region pretty thoroughly soaked. However, the sun shone forth the next morning, and in spite of the miry walking I started for a long ramble among the farms. I had to do a good deal of dodging to get around the pools and puddles, and there were certain of the "slues" in the hollows which almost brought me to a stop. Yet by climbing along on fences or resorting to the embankment of an irrigating ditch, or by cutting across a field I contrived to continue my ramble.

The country was good to look at in spite of the over-abundance of mud and water. On the eastern horizon rose ranges of snowy mountains, but the lowlands were a green paradise. The grazing fields, in particular, were very beautiful with their cattle, horses, or hogs, and with their scattering ancient oaks. These oaks abounded, but never gathered in a thick wood. They were wide-spreading and stately and made the country look like a park. Other native trees were very few, except along the streams, which were apt to be thickly screened by willows and cottonwoods. Many great tracts of land were set out to regular rows of prune and peach trees, and every farmhouse seemed to have its packing shed and its great heap of wooden drying-trays. Formerly pears were a staple fruit, but some sort of a blight has put the trees out of business.



The news

The people I met and spoke with were agreed that it was an unusual condition to have too much water, and the owners of the flooded lands were not altogether happy, yet any damage they suffered was largely offset by the drowning of such pests as the gophers and ground squirrels. The local conditions therefore were on the whole satisfactory, but certain other sections had not fared so well. For instance, in the same county, there used to be a lake thirty miles broad and a hundred long. It afforded fine fishing, and the hunters resorted to it to shoot the abounding ducks and geese. Gradually it dried away and left some of the richest farmland in the world. The old lake-bed became a great wheat-producing district, but now the heavy rains had begun to fill the basin of the former lake, and the body of water was fast expanding to its former size. The wheat had grown to be waist high and was well headed out, but the lake-bed dwellers had to abandon everything except the little they could carry away, and, driving their stock before them, they sought more elevated ground. It was thought that many years must pass before the water would again dry away.

As I walked on I at length wandered into a little village. Near its center I stopped on the piazza of a bakeshop. Here was a chair, a settee and several boxes occupied by a row of men smoking, spitting and talking. The weather was not propitious for field work, and

132 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

tangs was plenty. You'd often see the antelopes feeding in among the cattle. People e't their meat, but it was coarse and not so good as deer meat. You could go up there in those foothills you see to the east and kill a wagon load of deer in a day. They roamed about fifty to a hundred in a band.

"Bears was common up in the mountains—brown, cinnamon, black and grizzlies; but I wa'n't lookin' for them fellers. I was willin' to make friends. If they'd let me alone I'd let them alone, you bet yer boots I would. But one time I was up there helpin' old Billy Rhoades with his sheep. Fred Stacy was with me, and we was goin' across a little medder when we see a full-grown grizzly bear with a cub follerin' her, and they was comin' straight toward us.

"It happened there was a cluster of smallish pine trees near by, and Fred went up one tree and I went up another. I didn't have a thing to shoot with, and I don't suppose I'd have used a gun if I'd had one. The bear kind o' looked up at us but kept on down the trail. She found our camp, and she turned over our potatoes and beans and scattered them and our other things all about. Yes, she had a regular tear-up. But I was glad to git off with no worse damage. A bear with a cub will fight, you know, and I come as clost to a grizzly then as I want to, less'n the bear was in a cage.



Water for irrigation

"Another time old man Rhoades and his son was fetchin' some sheep off the mountains, and the boy went into a canyon for a drink. He lay down to git at the water when a black bear jumped out of the willers onto him and begun a-chawin' him. He hollered for the old man, who come hurryin' down—and there was the bear chawin' on his boy. The only thing the old man had to attack the bear with was a pocket knife. That was a poor weapon, but he saw he had the job to do, and he didn't hesitate. The bear was on the boy, and the old man was on the bear; and he got her, and he skinned her afterward. She mighty nigh killed the boy, and the old man was so tore and scratched he carried the scars to his grave.

"Anyone could have a horse in the early days by just goin' out and ketchin' a wild mustang. The way we used to do that was to build a corral consisting of a fence about eight feet high around a half acre or so, with a long wing fence extending out from it. Then when we see some mustangs feeding near we'd go out on the far side of 'em and give a yell to start 'em, and by heading 'em off we'd drive 'em against the wing fence and run 'em right into the corral. After that a man would go in and lasso one. He'd have to be on horseback or they'd run right over him.

"When he got a mustang roped he'd drag him out, put on a bridle and saddle, blindfold him and get on.

134 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

The mustang didn't like that, and he'd begin to buck. Seems to me I've seen 'em buck as high as that school-house over across the road. No matter what the mustang did, the rider had got to stick on. That was the only way those horses could be broke. They were the meanest things you ever see. They were good saddle ponies though—fine! An ordinary horse wouldn't stand half what they would. The mustangs were small, but they were tough and hardy—kind o' like a Jack rabbit. You could run one all day, and it would be about as good at the end as when it started; and the next morning it would buck you off if you wa'n't careful.

"When I come here, cattle, sheep and hogs were all the go. There was very little soil cultivated; but gradually it got to be a great wheat country. Now wheat has given way to orchards, and we ship fruit all over the world. Alfalfa is grown quite a little and is more of a money-maker than fruit. It's ready to cut now, and we're only waiting till the weather is settled so we can cure it. We git four or five crops by the time the frosts bring the season to an end. It's good feed for cattle and all right for horses if you use some grain hay with it. By grain hay I mean barley and wheat cut when it is in a stiff dough—that is with the grain just past the milk stage.

"I used to raise wheat, but we had fifteen dry seasons right a-running which did me up. Now the weather



At work along an irrigating ditch

seems to have changed and I look for fifteen wet seasons. So I'm goin' to try wheat again. You ain't sure of a crop unless you irrigate. When we people come here from the East we didn't know anything about irrigation. But somebody tried it and found it a success. Then we all turned loose. It's a good thing. At the same time there's a lot of hard, dirty work in irrigating.

"First you're obliged to plough and scrape till you've got your land level and in check. We put two or three acres in a check with a levee around it. The checks have to be smaller if the land is rough. Our land here is pretty smooth, and two men with a pair of horses can git a quarter section in order—leveling checks, making ditches and floodgates, all in about a couple of months. But you are out something right along digging to keep the channels clear and making repairs. Still, if a man would give me a place back in Tennessee whar I come from I wouldn't take it nohow, if I had to live on it. In a wet season your corn would turn yaller as a punkin—it was aggravatin'!"

"To show you what can be done here I want to tell you about a little orchard of apricots I bought a year ago. Everybody claimed it was run out, but I trimmed the trees and worked the ground and I got eight tons of fruit which I sold for twenty dollars a ton. That was better than a thump on the head with a sharp stone, wa'n't it?"

136 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"You can raise anything that will grow on the top side of the earth, in this valley. I got only two objections to it—in over half the land there's alkali, and secondly malaria is a good deal too common. You notice our houses ain't got cellars and are set up on posts off the ground—some of 'em three or four feet. That's on account of malaria.

"Perhaps it strikes you the houses must be cold in winter, but we don't have such sharp weather as they have in other parts of United States. I ain't seen but one snowfall in all the time I been here. You take a person from back East and drop 'em down here in March and they think they're in Paradise. Thar's an old lady from Iowa just come lately to this place, and she says it is the prettiest country she ever cast her eyes on. When she come everybody was freezin' and hoverin' over the fire in Iowa, while here it wa'n't cold worth mentioning, and she says, 'Here I'll live and here I'll die.'

"But things ain't always so pleasant in our valley as people think they're goin' to be. Thar's a mighty lot gits fooled. They think they can pick up twenty-dollar gold pieces, dog-gone-it; and they have it all figured out how easy they can make their fortunes. So as soon as they see a piece of property that they fancy they just dive in and pay a good round price. Then when they find they can't git rich in a few weeks like they expected,

they're sorry they grabbed so quick. Often they're so homesick that they're ready to take whatever anybody'll give for the property they've bought. There's an old negro here has picked up a lot of land from such fellers till he's got fifteen or twenty sections, and it's all paid for, too. He's a mighty good darkey. What he agrees to do he does, and he's looked up to about as much as anyone in this region. He's a cattle-man and a hog-man and has money laid away. Every one of his girls that gets married he gives five thousand dollars and a piece of land. That's a pretty good starter, eh?

"The poor investments that are made by strangers are mostly the fault of the real estate agents. I know of a man who sold out in Kansas and come here and a real estate agent induced him to buy a section of old alkali land at forty dollars an acre—made him believe it was the richest land in the country. The agent done wrong. I call that robbery. The land wouldn't sprout backyard peas. It wa'n't fitten to look at. Even salt grass wouldn't grow on some of it. You know what poor stuff salt grass is. The cattle will eat it when they can't get anything else, but it's tough and they got to have good teeth to bite it, and it won't fatten 'em any. Well, that man put up a house and a barn and a corral before he found out what sort of a bargain he'd made. He finally went back to where he come from, and his

138 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

buildings are standing empty. He's got his money in that place, and he'll never get it out.

"Of course a good many fellers have taken land and made money; but there's a blamed sight more who have lost."

As a whole the region around Visalia looked productive and prosperous, and in order to see some of the poorer land of the valley I went on farther north. It so happened that I reached the place I had selected soon after five in the morning. There was no station—only a half dozen little homes and two or three small dilapidated stores, and a white schoolhouse that stood by itself off a quarter of a mile on the open unfenced prairie. A streak of yellow above the serrated peaks of an endless chain of snowy mountains in the east gave promise of the dawn. On the telegraph lines perched a twittering group of linnets. Near by was a box freight car, and while I stood looking around me, a tramp slid out of the car, shouldered his bag and went off along the track; but on the outskirts of the settlement he stopped, built a little fire, and I suppose cooked himself some sort of a breakfast.

I walked out on the prairie. Here and there I could see scattered houses—rather forlorn-looking places, most of them, and usually with no thought whatever bestowed on appearances. The plain was perfectly treeless, except that an occasional home had about it a

A prospector and his outfit





few shade or fruit trees, and now and then a cluster of willow bushes grew beside the irrigating ditches. The ditches conveyed water to some alfalfa farms two or three miles away where the soil was deeper. Most of the land in the neighborhood was only fit for grazing, and close under the surface lay "hardpan"—a soft sandstone. At one place I came across men at work setting out fruit trees. They were on low ground where the soil had accumulated a little, but in order that the tree roots might have a chance to develop satisfactorily the workers were blasting holes in the hardpan, one for each tree. A few horses, cows and goats were staked out near the village homes, and I saw a drove of black hogs munching along over the knolls, and late in the forenoon a vast flock of sheep drifted past.

A squad of men from the nearest town were ploughing, scraping and grading the road, which heretofore had never been turnpiked. The soil was very hard, and one of the men said, "It's rough on the tools. I had a new plough yesterday and in three hours I wore the point plumb out. I don't see how these fellers that keep store here make a livin'. They never seem to be doin' no outside work and there's mighty few customers. Most o' the time they stand at the door lookin' for us to come in and spend the money we make on the road. Yet they wear good clothes and smoke a cigaret once

in a while. One of 'em has a sheep ranch. I guess he's gettin' along all right. He had a Jim Dandy little wagon come to him on the train last week."

The man now turned to his work and I went to watch some boys not far away who were gathered around a small pond grabbing for pollywogs. They said they were going to use them for fish bait, and they had started to tell me about their luck in fishing when the bell in the schoolhouse cupola gave a few jingles. At once the boys dropped the pollywogs and scuttled away across the prairie to the temple of learning.

For the sake of variety I went in to have a look at one of the stores. It was not much more than a shanty and the supply of goods was very meagre. "Billy" McDonald was the proprietor. I found him a good deal disturbed because his horse was missing. "I left her loose in the stable last night," said he, "and she got out and has gone back to town where I bought her not long ago."

A customer came in. He was a stranger who happened to be driving through the place and he wanted to purchase some soap. Billy seemed surprised. He didn't carry such an article in his stock. "Neither did the other store," he explained. So the customer bought a glass of whiskey instead.

Later in the day I again took the train and was soon in a region more favored. Indeed, in my memory of

the valley I see little else than a constant succession of orchards and vineyards and great wheat fields and luxuriant pastures. But the homes did not seem in keeping with nature's affluence. Many were unpainted, unshadowed and shabby and small, and looked as if in the heat of summer they would be blistered off the face of the earth. Few were such as we in our older Eastern states would consider at all attractive or comfortable. That the Vale of Plenty should have its imperfections is to be expected; and on the other hand its attractions are many, and there lies before it a future full of promise.

NOTE.—The San Joaquin Valley is one of the great agricultural basins of the world. It is two hundred and fifty miles long by about fifty wide. In it grows half the wheat raised in the state, and wheat farms of ten thousand to fifty thousand acres are not uncommon. Here, too, you may see thousands of acres of alfalfa, vast vineyards, and astonishingly large orchards of prunes, peaches, apricots, figs and other fruits. It produces nearly all the raisins of the United States, and fabulous crops of asparagus, potatoes, beans and melons; and it is famous for its cattle, sheep and hogs. Stop at any of the chief towns, such as Visalia, Fresno, or Stockton, and journey out into the surrounding country and see what is being done. Irrigation is the chief dependence for producing crops, and water for this purpose is abundant.

Another attraction of the valley is the excursions that can be made from it into the Sierras. Best of all is a visit to the Yosemite, but scarcely less interesting is a trip to the wild canyon of King's River. This latter journey is made from Visalia, partly by stage, partly by

142 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

pack and saddle train. The gorge lacks the waterfalls of the Yosemite, and its walls are not so precipitous, but they rise into even wilder and more stupendous heights. On account of snow and flooded streams July and August are the best months for the trip. To add to the fascination of this jaunt you have close at hand Mount Whitney, the loftiest mountain in the United States, if we except the Alaskan giants. It is easily ascended from the west side. The streams are full of trout, and game abounds. Still another attraction of the region is the General Grant National Park containing many of the famous big trees.



The road to the mountains

VII

APRIL IN THE YOSEMITE

FROM the San Joaquin Valley I went by a branch railroad to Raymond far back in the Sierra foothills. The journey was delightful. Everywhere were flowery fields and pastures, and at times the wastelands were fairly covered with radiant blossoms. Some of the patches and streaks of bloom were blue, some purple, some white, and still others were a blaze of reds and yellows. The poppies were perhaps the most abundant and striking, but there were multitudes of delicate bluebells, and there were "nigger toes" and "popcorn" and dainty snowdrops and "little Johnnies" and many more.

Raymond is a half wild little village with some fine rough hills and ravines about, but no sign of grand mountains or big trees or charming waterfalls. The Yosemite was still distant a two days' stage drive. It was the opening of the season and visitors were few. Only two others went on when I did. They were an elderly man and wife. But the stage also carried several men who were going to the Valley to work, one

144 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

of them a Chinaman cook, another a blacksmith known as "Hank," and a third whom his comrades addressed as "Bud." The stage was a three-seated top wagon, and I sat on the front seat between the driver and the blacksmith.

Hour after hour we went on climbing among the rough, stony hills. They were not very interesting. Everywhere were granite boulders and scattered oaks garlanded with mistletoe, and now and then would occur a scrawny pine. In places there was much undergrowth such as sagebrush, chaparral, buckeye, and a bushy lupine that was loaded with purple blossoms. Then, too, there were great patches of poison oak, each shrub a reddish mass of new foliage. "You want to be careful how you walk through that," advised the driver; "though some people ain't affected by it at all. It don't trouble me none, and I've monkeyed with it for forty years—walked through it, handled it, and even had it in my mouth."

Grass was so plentiful that the driver remarked, "I would just like to be a cow for the next three months. I'd be sure to have all I wanted to eat, and I'd have nothing to do only to lie around. But by the end of June the grass will be dried brown, and the pasturing won't be so pleasant. Still, that brown grass ain't bad; for it's like hay and is all right till we have rains to wash the goodness out. We are likely to get wet

weather in October, and then the cattle have a hard time. But if the rains come early in the fall the new grass soon starts. If the rains are late the dry feed is destroyed and the new doesn't get a chance to take its place. So the cattle half starve all winter."

In the valleys were occasional little farms or the homes of ranchmen, and presently the elderly man on the back seat pointed to one of these and said, "It seems to me that the people who live there must lead a lonely life."

"Oh, no," responded the driver, "they can drive to town in forty minutes; but then, they don't go there very often because they're afraid of the cars."

We frequently saw birds. Red-headed woodpeckers were working away on the dead trees and the telegraph poles, and blue jays and linnets were common. Once I got a glimpse of a robin, and there were a few hawks and soaring buzzards. The driver called my attention to a quail standing under a bush, and said, "These foothills are full of them in the fall."

Several times we had a momentary glimpse of a ground squirrel scudding to shelter. The blacksmith claimed these squirrels were good to eat, but the driver declared they were no better than rats. "Well," said the blacksmith, "cook 'em properly and they're good enough for anybody."

"Some people eat rattlesnakes," observed the driver.

146 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"If I was going to eat one I'd want to kill it myself," the blacksmith said. "You know if you only just wound one it will bite itself where it was hurt and fill its flesh full of poison.

In a number of spots along the way were rubbish dumps of dirt and broken stone where some old gold mine had been worked, and the lady passenger wished she could get out and hunt for a "nudget." We passed through Grub Gulch which contains a mine still in operation, and in the rough mountain hollow was a rude little hamlet. The mine is not of much account; but in the booming days that followed its discovery there was a wild and lawless community here. "They used to have a man for breakfast every little while," declared the driver.

Now and then we met a team, and among the rest were several wagons loaded with apples that left a trail of delicious fragrance behind them. Later we saw the orchards in the secluded mountain glens, and I asked the driver if the fruit was profitable. He said, "That depends on the man who raises it and on circumstances. The fellow that handles this orchard we are passing has hard scratching to make ends meet, and he's close as a mosquito, too; but some do very well."

Much of the way the road clung to a steep hillside. It was narrow and crooked, and on the outer side looked dangerously precipitous. When teams approached

The Valley of the Yosemite





each other the drivers shouted a warning and were apt to stop to consider just how to pass. The broadest place possible was selected and one team crowded up to the bank while the other drove gingerly along on the verge. Our own experience was mild compared with what it would have been later in the season when the five-span freighting wagons were running.

We were constantly encountering streams. They were seldom bridged and we splashed straight across. It was a pleasure to see them, for they were not like the muddy streams of the lowlands, but were clear and sweet, with stone-strewn courses down which they leaped and foamed with unceasing melody. The road was more or less muddy, but the driver assured us that the first thirty miles of our journey were decidedly pleasanter than they would be in summer. Then there would be dust and torrid heat. "Why," said he, "it gets so hot that the wagon tongues hang out. I've seen the thermometer up to 118 in the shade."

One of the things that adds zest to the stage trip is the possibility of a hold-up. In the past these hold-ups have occurred about once in four years. The previous season a highwayman had relieved a load of tourists of their purses, but did not take their jewelry or watches. He apologized for the annoyance he was causing and said he didn't like to have to resort to such a practice,

148 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

but he needed the money. When the collection had been finished an English tourist got out his camera and said to the desperado, "I'd like to take your picture, you know."

"Certainly," was the reply, "go ahead," and he submitted to the photographing very gracefully and then departed.

The hold-up that preceded this one was an affair of more consequence. There were five stages going up the valley that day, one behind another, and a single man held them all up right in a bunch. He was a little particular, and when he thought a man had not turned over to him as much money as he carried, he ordered his victim to "dig up some more." But he was not without a touch of ceremonial politeness, for he presented each of his benefactors with his card on which was printed the words, "The Black Kid." At length his work was completed and he took to the brush and was seen no more.

We stopped once in ten or twelve miles to change horses, but this made little delay as the horses were harnessed and waiting for us. The longest pause was twenty minutes at the station where we had our noon lunch. After this lunch the blacksmith, as he settled himself in his place, smacked his lips and declared that the cream pie he had eaten for dessert was the finest pie of any sort he had ever tasted. "The only fault I

have to find," said he in conclusion, "is that the cook is too good a mathematicianer and cuts his pies into too many pieces."

By mid-afternoon we had passed the foothills, and ahead of us lay a mountain. Bud informed the driver that he was going to get out and "hike" for a while, and when he alighted the blacksmith and I joined him. The trees had become more numerous and there were many tall, handsome yellow pines. Bushes were fewer, but in places the ground was hidden by a low evergreen growth of bear clover. "The bears don't eat it," said the blacksmith, "but it smells like 'em."

"Seems to me," said Bud, "it smells just like a wet dog; and if you walk through it for an hour or two in summer you'll have that smell on your clothes for the rest of your life."

Just then the blacksmith found a horseshoe in the road and he hung it up on a bush. "That'll bring me good luck," he remarked.

"I don't know about that," was Bud's comment. "I've quit hangin' 'em up lately because I noticed I got drunk as a lord every time I did it."

As we climbed upward the ground became increasingly muddy and slippery, and at length patches of snow were to be seen here and there in the woodland. These were larger and more frequent as we went higher until the mantle of white was everywhere. The sky

150 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

had gloomed over and it began to storm, a mixture of rain and sleet. Now we arrived at a rough shanty and barn where the stage was to change horses. What a wintry wilderness it was!—white roofs and a giant evergreen forest roundabout, gloomy and mysterious with the cold storm.

When the stage came we walkers got in and tucked the blankets tightly about us and everyone prepared for a disagreeable journey; but shortly the mists drifted away and the sun shone into the shaggy, dripping woodland, and brightened the dark foliage and the brown, rough-barked tree trunks. The driver seemed anxious about his return trip on the morrow. "Gee! this snow'll be frozen then," he said, "and it'll be slick as glass. The brakes won't hold and I'll have a lot o' trouble to keep the wagon from runnin' onto the horses."

We presently passed over the top of the mountain ridge and were in really magnificent forest that man had never devastated. The trees grew to full maturity and died and fell to enrich the mountain mould for future generations just as their ancestors had before them from time immemorial. Many of the sugar and yellow pines and cedars were four to six feet in diameter, and they often towered up fully two hundred feet. It was a satisfaction just to look at their straight and towering boles. The noblest of the trees and those most prized by the lumbermen were the sugar pines. Speci-







The Yosemite Falls

mens have been found that had attained a thickness of twelve feet and were still living, sound in every fiber. The cones are very large and handsome. They grow to be from a foot to eighteen inches long and beautify the tree and ground beneath for months after the seeds have taken wing. The tree's name comes from a sweet gum that exudes from the heart-wood where wounds have been made either by forest fires or the ax. The gum takes the shape of irregular, crisp clusters of kernels. When fresh it is perfectly white and delicious.

In descending the mountain it was quite necessary to hold on. The wheels cut through the snow in a very uncertain way, and we thumped and jolted and shook about in a manner that was very disturbing. The lady on the seat behind was constantly cautioning her husband to hang on to her, even if her arm was getting blistered with his clutch. When her side of the vehicle tipped up she begged him to hurry and shift as near her end of the seat as possible to keep the balance. When it went the other way she had him slide back to his side. Yet in spite of all he could do to act as ballast she was certain at times we were going over. "Oh, oh!" she exclaimed as we passed safely through one crisis, "what foolishness to come all this way and over such poor and dangerous roads just to see a little scenery that we may not care for after all! I told you we would regret it, but you were bound to come."

152 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

Once when the driver let the horses break into a trot along the verge of a precipice she ordered him to "Stop!" and added in an aside that she had never seen such reckless driving. Gradually we had left the snow behind and now we were much of the time dragging along in the mud. Darkness came, but at last we saw the lights of the tiny settlement of Wawona ahead and came out into a clearing in the valley basin, and there was our hotel with shelter and warmth and food.

The ground was stiff with frost the next morning, the air crisp and clear. We were on the road at seven and were soon climbing another mountain, snugging along the slope and creeping in and out of the ravines. Deer tracks were frequent in the highway mud, and these set the Yosemite workers who were on the stage to telling their experiences in hunting the animals, and they pointed out this place and that along the trail where they had shot one or more. We were on a government reservation where hunting was against the law, and from May to October a hundred of Uncle Sam's cavalry were stationed at Wawona to see that the law was enforced. But after the cavalry left, the huntsmen banged away very much as they pleased. While the soldier guardians were present they exercised some degree of restraint, yet the efficiency of the troops was generally rated pretty low. According to a state official whose headquarters were in the Yosemite they were

worse than useless. "I'll give you an instance," said he. "Five soldiers caught one of the fellows that lives in these parts out hunting and they started for camp with him. But on the way a deer crossed their trail, and every one of the soldiers shot at it and missed. 'Give me my gun,' says the prisoner, 'and I'll kill the deer for you, if you want me to.'

"So they gave him his gun and he brought down the deer. 'Well,' they says, 'you can keep your gun and hike out.'

"Yes, sir, these soldiers kill any quantity of game and they've fished out every stream and lake in this region. Before them Arabs got in here we had some of the finest fishing in the Sierras.

"Once the captain told me he was going to bring his cavalry up to camp in the Valley. Him and I locked horns right there and the soldiers didn't come. Thunder and lightning! I have no use for their sort, and there's too much red tape and pompousness about the whole management. The captain has got to come down off the roost if he wants to do business with me. Any bulldozing proposition won't go.

"We had a fire on the reservation last summer and it burned for six weeks and ran over a territory thirty-five miles square. For the whole six weeks the Valley was full of smoke, and the tourists who come didn't get to see hardly anything at all. The fire very near

154 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

burned up the soldiers' camp. They were supposed to be fighting the fire; but what class of persons are they? A fellow with any ginger in him wouldn't take a job at thirteen dollars a month. They aren't in the army to work. They know how to beat the game from A to Z, and for accomplishing anything really effective they're no earthly use. Their police duty is a farce. Why, they're constantly getting drunk at Wawona and raising thunder. They make a regular scat-house of the place. This fire I was speaking of was altogether too much for them. They didn't know how to handle it, and they didn't care to exert themselves much anyhow. It's said that some of them would burn a space around themselves and then lie down and have a sleep. By and by the fire got up into my region and I took ten men and in three days put the whole thing out. With a dozen of these California foothill boys I can do everything five hundred of the soldiers and a brigadier-general in command of 'em could do, and a blamed sight better. They are supposed to keep cattle and sheep off the reservation, but there's men who will feed a flock of sheep all around those soldiers. Give me a few local rangers and I'd nab every herder that sticks his nose across the line. Geewhizcar! I'd catch more trespassers in six months than they would in a hundred years."

The stage toiled on till we were again in the white winter woods. As we climbed higher the snow grew deeper and in some places a passage had been shovelled through, leaving walls on either side half-way to the top of the stage. Finally we reached a little station over six thousand feet above the sea level. It was in a small clearing, with the dark, serrated woods all about, and it was fairly buried in drifts eight or ten feet deep. A narrow channel had been dug, and a little space cleared before the barn. We ate a hasty lunch and were soon on the road again, wallowing through the snow and pitching about in the most exciting manner, always with a vague fear that the vehicle might chance to turn over and send us to destruction down the mountain side.

In time we came to where we could look down on the famous Valley—a long winding crevice bounded by mighty cliffs and peaks of many varying forms. How quiet and protected it did look after all those savage inhospitable heights and hollows we had traversed! But the thing that made it most attractive was a slender waterfall dropping over the face of one of the giant bluffs—dainty, fairy-like and giving the otherwise sober landscape a touch of lightness that was very fascinating. This fall was the keynote of the scene through all the long descent to the valley bottom. It was the Bridal Veil, dashing down for nine hundred feet, a mass of

156 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

foam and spray, and as we drew near we saw shreds of rainbow painting the mists. Across the valley the driver pointed out another waterfall, but a very tiny one, which he said was called "The Maiden's Tear."

"That's a very curious name," said the lady passenger. "Why do they call it that?"

"Because it is so far from the Bridal Veil," replied the driver.

The valley is about seven miles long and nowhere much exceeds a mile in width. Nearly all of it is perfectly level, some of it open meadows and pastures, but mostly thinly wooded with tall pines and cedars and firs intermingled with occasional deciduous trees or groves. A small river, rapid and rocky and crystal clear, wended its way through the vale, and, all along, the great cliffs soared skyward in many a vast buttress and pinnacle. It was a wilderness valley, and yet it was so level and secluded and so hedged about by protecting mountains that it seemed a spot of eternal calm and serenity.

The Yosemite was first seen by white men in January, 1851. For some time previous there had been friction with the Indians on the mountain borders; but the first serious quarrel occurred when six Indians visited a trading-post thirty miles west of the Valley, and a drunken ruffian from Texas, without any reasonable cause, stabbed to the heart the chief of the party.

The other five savages at once shot the Texan to death with their bows and arrows, and retreated to the forest. Two nights later a pack of sixteen mules was stolen from the trading-post corral by the Indians and driven off to the mountains.

These happenings occasioned great excitement among the whites. It was midwinter, yet a company of about one hundred men from the vicinity armed themselves and started on the trail. The Indians had gone to the Yosemite canyon where they converted the mules into jerked meat, and there the frontiersmen surprised them and slaughtered a large number. It was a massacre that included men, women and children. The whites were revenged and they left the Valley. But, though they were the true discoverers of the famous spot it was only made known to the outside world by an expedition that went on a similar raid two months later. Those who took part in this second foray had a rough time in the snowstorms and deep drifts of the mountains, and when they reached the Valley they found no Indians except one old squaw. However, the scenery so impressed certain members of the party that their descriptions of it aroused very wide interest in its marvels.

The Valley is supposed to have been given its peculiar character by a convulsion that caused the rock mass filling the space to sink to some unknown depth. For

158 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

a vast period of time the waste from the sides of the cliffs dropped into this abyss, which was doubtless occupied by a lake of surpassing beauty. But at length the hollow was filled sufficiently by the falling rocks and by the soil the streams brought from the regions surrounding so that the lake became the present alluvial valley.

Half way up the glen is a village consisting of a two-story wooden hotel and its annexes and several photograph studios, a store, a tiny church and a few dwellings. The hamlet looked strangely lost with the tremendous heights towering around. Just beyond a meadow the Yosemite Fall drops over from the crest of a rock wall twenty-six hundred feet high. How slender and beautiful it is! and how amazing its long leap! It brightens the whole vicinity and relieves the somberness of the ragged mountainous cliffs, and the air resounds with its mellow roar. It is characteristic of the canyon that you have the music of the waterfalls in your ears wherever you go, while the great rock walls loom about with a constantly changing sky-line. Of course, not all visitors are satisfied, and one man said to me, "These mountains around the Valley are all right, but I don't think much of the waterfalls, after seeing Niagara."

As well say a humming bird is not beautiful because you have seen an eagle.

Up at the far end of the valley where it narrows and you look ahead into a wild wooded defile, is Mirror Lake. This, however, scarcely deserves its name; for the only time it is apt to be quiet is before sunrise. Soon afterward the wind sucks down the valley and the surface is broken with waves for the rest of the day.

Trails lead to the top of all the important bluffs and peaks, and it would seem as if a person could climb to his heart's content. But to some people a trail is too prosaic and they like the glory of going up where there are difficulties and danger. In a recent summer an old Alpine climber named Bailey and a young companion decided to follow up a steep crevice along the wall of El Capitan to the summit of that king of cliffs. It proved a very arduous task, and the younger man several times urged the elder to return; but the latter was determined to go on. They were nearly to the top, and Bailey, who was ahead, sat down on a ledge and reached his staff to assist his comrade. Suddenly he toppled over and bounded along down the rocky slope. The young man saw him disappear, and to calm his nerves he seated himself and smoked a cigaret. He did not dare to descend, and when he rose he struggled up to the summit and followed the trail down to the hotel. Helpers promptly returned with him carrying a number of long ropes, and after a good deal of difficulty they

recovered the body of Bailey about seven hundred feet below where he fell.

The winter residents of the Valley number only about thirty, but in summer the village expands wonderfully. Hundreds of tents are put up to serve as homes for campers and the place is very populous. Formerly this was a "tin can town" just as are most California hamlets—that is, the street and neighborhood were strewn with the rusty receptacles of canned goods which enter largely into the Western bill of fare. But now every dweller, temporary or permanent is compelled to bury his old tins. It seems a pity that the buildings should be so uncomely and cheap, and one regrets the ugly wooden or iron bridges, so artificial and out of keeping with the landscape. The bridges might well be arches of the native stone, simple and permanent, that would make the scenes of which they are a part more beautiful instead of less so.

When my visit came to an end and I rode out of the Yosemite it was with many a lingering and half-regretful backlook as we climbed the mountain, and left behind that vale of enchantment with its mighty environing heights and delectable waterfalls. Two ladies sat on the box seat with the driver, who was unusually youthful, intelligent and entertaining. They were discussing the timidity of travellers, and the driver said, "I have had ladies riding on this seat, who, when the wagon

gave a bad jolt, would holler and grab hold of me."

"You liked that, didn't you?" said the lady next to him.

"Well, not while I was drivin'," he responded. "I wouldn't object some other times, perhaps."

"I suppose you do have some funny people on the stage," the lady remarked.

"Yes," said he, "there was a trip last summer I carried a load that was all women, and every one of 'em was an old maid, and always would be. The youngest of the lot must have been thirty-five or forty."

"That's not so very old," the lady interrupted. "There's plenty of chances for her yet."

"Well," was the driver's response, "all I can say is, if she's goin' to marry she'd better get a move on her. Those old maids was at me to tell 'em a story, or give 'em a conundrum; and finally I says, 'Why is it that an old maid likes to go to church early?'

"They couldn't tell, and I said, 'Because she wants to be sure to be there when the hymns are given out.'

"They said I was awful to give such a conundrum as that, but it pleased 'em all the same."

"Were those old maids from the East?" inquired the lady.

"Yes, there ain't none out here," replied the driver. "Our girls all marry, and there's not enough to go around."

"You are not married, are you?" queried the lady.

"Oh, I was taken long ago," he responded. "Get up, Humpy; go on Smoke!" said he cracking his whip over the backs of the front horses.

"What are the names of the other two?" the lady questioned.

"Coon and Toothpick," he replied.

Each of the three hundred and fifty horses on the route has its name and its individuality, but I think the names of our four had more than the average of picturesqueness.

From Wawona, where we arrived in the afternoon, I made a side trip to see the big trees. This necessitated an eight-mile climb up a mountain side; for the trees love a high altitude. The road had only just been opened through the snows, and once our stage got stuck in a drift. Considerable digging had to be done before the struggling horses could drag us free. As we were toiling slowly along the driver asked us if we had ever seen one of their black California rabbits. We never had.

"Why, there's one now," he said, pointing on ahead.

Sure enough, there was the rabbit sitting on its haunches alert and watchful close by the road, and it was nearly three feet tall. I expected every moment it would leap away, but we continued to approach and it did not move except that I saw an eye blink and its

The Grizzly Giant



ears waggle a trifle. We were all very much excited over the sight and were exclaiming softly to one another when lo! we suddenly realized that the rabbit was nothing but a remnant of a burned-out stump which chanced from a certain view-point to have the outline of a rabbit.

When we were well up on the height we changed to a sleigh and at last we came to the forest giants. They are in the midst of heavy woodland and are scattered among trees of various other species, many of which are themselves of magnificent girth and height; but the sequoias stand out distinctly. Their reddish brown bark is unlike the bark of the rest of the trees in texture as well as color, and the larger trees far exceed in size any of their comrades not of the same family. They differ also from the balance of the forest in having dome-like tops instead of pointed ones. Most of them are sadly scarred about the base by fire; but the charred crevices and hollows date far back and are said to be due to a habit the Indians had of letting fires run through the woodland to clear it of undergrowth and make easier travelling and hunting.

The most venerable and the largest member of the clan is the "Grizzly Giant." It is supposed to be over five thousand years old, and its immense size, its shattered and dead top and gnarled limbs make it look like the ancestor of its race. The tree is ninety-three

164 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

feet in circumference, and its first limb, a hundred feet from the ground, has a diameter of six feet. Many of the sequoias have broken and bare tops, but this is the work of storms rather than age. Even when a big tree falls the end is still far off; for the wood does not decay readily at heart, and the wasting away from the outside is very slow. Trees that were thrown down before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock are in the Sierra forests today with wood in them as sound and bright in color as it was in their prime. Most full-grown trees are not much over twenty feet in diameter and about two hundred and seventy-five feet in height. But the giants of the race go up fifty feet more. The trees, except for accidents, seem to lack little of being immortal. They live on indefinitely until cast down by storms, burned, killed by lightning or destroyed by man.

The fruitfulness of the sequoias is marvelous. The cones are only about two inches in length but the branches hang full of them and each is packed with two or three hundred seeds. Millions of seeds are ripened annually by a single tree—no doubt, enough in some cases to plant all the mountain ranges in the world. However, very few seeds ever get the chance to germinate, and of those that do, not one tree in ten thousand lives through the vicissitudes that beset its youth. Yet trees abound of all ages, from fresh-starting saplings to those in the glory of their prime, and the

giant trees seem abundantly able to maintain their race in eternal vigor.

The day following this visit to the big trees I returned to Raymond; and it was not so prosaic a change from the wonderland where I had been as might have been expected. Indeed, it was a real delight to descend from the wintry mountains and to gradually find the spring about us—at first only faint hints, but finally a green earth, and new leafage on the trees and abounding blossoms, and the birds flitting and singing.

NOTE—The Yosemite season lasts from early April until October though it is now possible to go at any time of the year without serious discomfort. The cold and the heavy snowfall on the mountains are the chief deterrents to winter visits. The best months are May and June when the falls are full of water, and there is no dust. The entire control of the Park has passed into the hands of the United States government since I visited the valley. A railroad has also been built to the borders of the Park from Merced making access easy and cutting down the stage ride to about sixteen miles. It is, however, best to go one way by the old route in order not to miss seeing the wonderful big trees at Wawona.

VIII

AROUND THE GOLDEN GATE

THE situation of San Francisco makes it a logical metropolis. It has one of the largest harbors in the world, and there is no other that can in the least rival this between San Diego and Puget Sound. Besides, the bay and its rivers give an admirable opportunity for extensive and cheap water commerce inland, and the great fertile valleys which open away toward the interior are naturally tributary to the city that guards the Golden Gate. The city is built on about a dozen hills which add greatly to its picturesqueness. It turns its back on the sea, and its wharves front the bay easterly. The name which designates the passage from the Pacific into the harbor was applied by Fremont in 1848, and has nothing to do with the gold-bearing districts. "Golden" referred to the fertility of the country on the shores of the bay.

The settlement of the place dates back to 1776 when the Franciscan Friars established a Mission here. The Mission was in the center of the peninsula, half way

Looking from the Fishermen's Wharf toward the Golden Gate



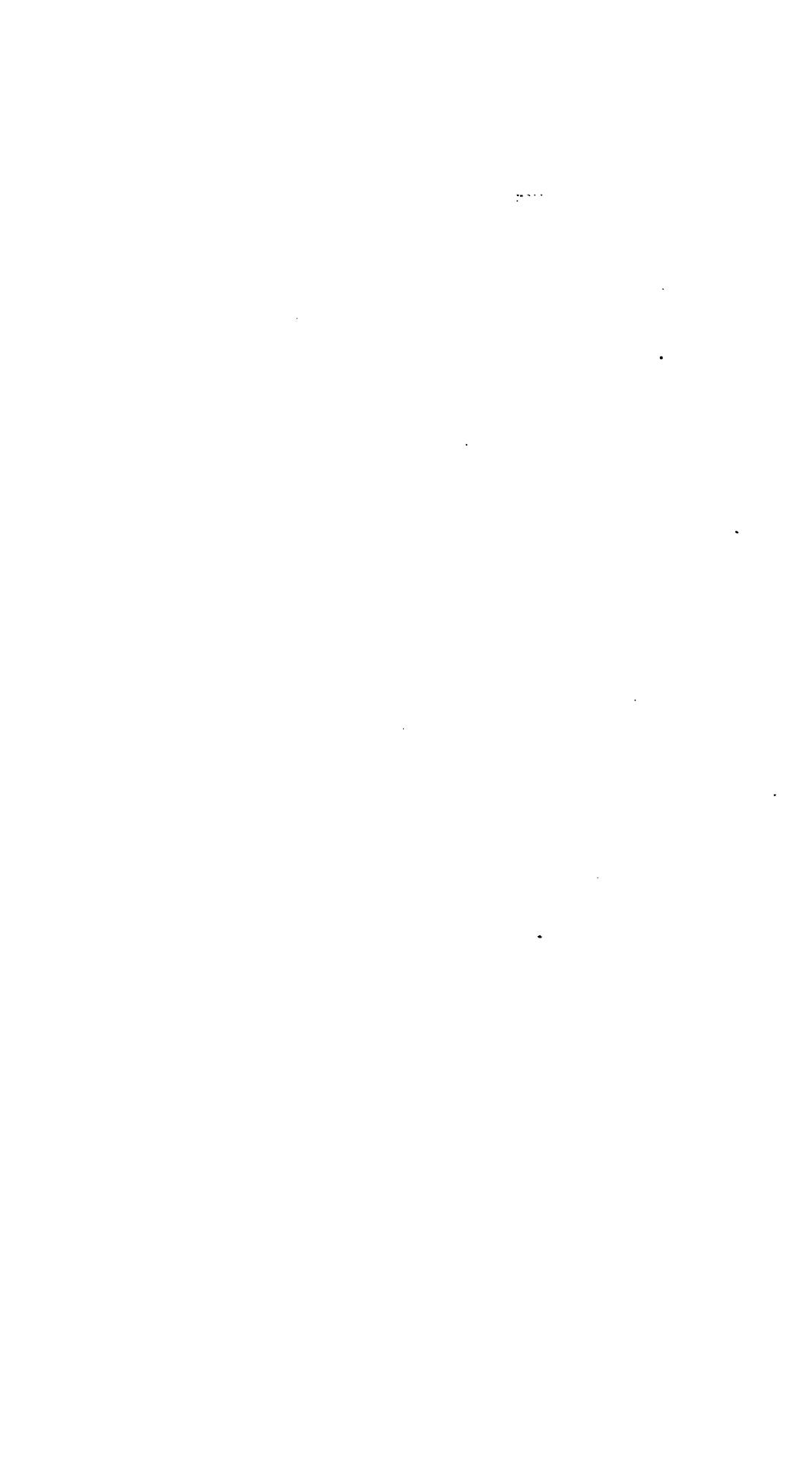
between the sea and the harbor. For over fifty years it was the nucleus of quite a village, and the community in its prime had a population of five hundred Indians and Mexicans. Another settlement was presently established on the shore of the bay for commercial purposes and came to have a considerable trade in hides and tallow.

In January, 1848, James W. Marshall discovered gold while digging a ditch for a sawmill about forty-five miles northeast of Sacramento. This caused tremendous excitement in San Francisco and two thirds of the population left for the new region of promise. Lots in the city sold for one half what they were worth a month before; but the necessities of life began to get scarce in the gold camps, and some of the miners returned to San Francisco and prepared to profit through the rapid increase of business that was sure to come. The large finds of gold in the interior brought an inrush of newcomers and the population early in 1849 was two thousand. By July it was five thousand, and this number doubled the following year. Between April and December 1849 over five hundred vessels arrived bringing thirty-five thousand passengers. As many more immigrants came overland; but the great majority found their way with little delay to the mines. Such was the eagerness to share in the golden fortune that scores of vessels lay in the harbor unable to pro-

170 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

debauchery and assaults. During the early years of the city's awakening many murders were committed by the desperadoes, yet no one was hanged for the crimes, and the courts became a byword. The situation was intolerable and in 1851 the famous Vigilance Committee was organized in the interests of law and order. This Committee within a month tried and hanged four men and banished thirty others, and the course pursued was universally upheld by public opinion. Conditions became normal and the Committee ceased its labors. But in 1856 crime had once more become rampant and the law impotent. The Vigilants reorganized and acted with the same vigor and with the same results as before, and there was again individual security and public order.

The history of San Francisco's beginnings are extremely interesting to anyone who visits the city and these strange happenings and conditions form a fascinating background. They were constantly in my mind when I was there early in 1906 and added much to the significance of what I saw. For a place of its size I was surprised to find so much of it built of wood. Of course certain fine residences and many of the big business blocks were of material more permanent and substantial, but even in the commercial heart of the town wooden structures were plentiful, while in the residence sections redwood dwellings were almost





A glimpse of the shipping

universal. I wondered what would happen if a big fire got started, and mentioned this thought to a native. He, however, assured me that I need have no apprehension on that score; for they had the finest fire department in the world, and no fire could get beyond control.

Another feature of the city that engaged my attention was its weather. Someone had told me that, "with its rains and fogs and rough winds San Francisco has about the meanest climate that ever a man set foot in." I suppose there is a modicum of truth in the statement, but during my stay the weather was rather fine. If we had rain it came at night, and though there was often fog and gloom in the early morning the sun presently broke through. Then followed a period of dreamy calm, but later the wind came blustering in from the sea and for much of the afternoon blew with uncomfortable violence. This seemed to be the daily program.

The city's fame as a seaport drew me early to the wharves. Everywhere here for miles were ships loading and unloading, and I found toil and din and smoke and dubious smells no matter whither I wandered. Against the sky was a dense forest of tapering masts with their network of rigging, and here and there were stout steamer funnels belching soot and fumes. The great drays banged and rattled along over the tough pavements, there was clanking of chains, the panting of

engines, the shouts of men. Loafers strolled about or roosted on piles of boards and other chance seats, and children and sight-seers mingled with the rest of the crowds, all drawn by the allurement of the sea-going ships and the varied activity. It was a rude region, and the business buildings which fronted toward the wharves were dingy and forbidding. Saloons were predominant, and these endeavored to interest the public by the individuality of their names, as for instance, the North Pole, the Castle, the Tea Cup, Life Saving Station and Thirst Parlor, The Fair Wind, and Jim's Place.

Whatever else the stranger in San Francisco missed seeing he was sure to visit the Chinese quarter. Here was an oriental community of fifteen thousand in the heart of the city. It occupied an area of about ten square blocks. No space was wasted, and besides the main thoroughfares there were many narrow byways running in all directions and lined with little places of business. Often the buildings were curiously ornamented and made resplendent with many-colored paints and big paper lanterns, but the majority were battered and aged and grimy.

The first Chinese to arrive in California came on the brig *Eagle* in February, 1848. They were two men and one woman. Within the next two years about five hundred came, and by 1852 there were eighteen thous-

and. Large numbers went direct to the mines where they worked for a few cents a day. The enmity aroused by their competition in the labor market resulted in exclusion laws, and latterly their numbers have been decreasing. Naturally, therefore, the racial bitterness which the Americans have felt toward the Mongolians is somewhat allayed. Yet harsh feeling is still to be encountered, and one man enlightened me thus:

"They ought to be kept out—every one of 'em. Go to the farming country and watch how they manage on their ranches workin' all the time, night and day, and Sundays, rain or shine. A white man has no show against them—not a particle. When it comes to disposing of what he raises, the Chinaman sells every time he starts out to make a trade. Ask him the price of a bunch of beets.

" 'Five cents,' he says. .

" 'Too much,' you say.

"He picks up another bunch and says, 'Here, two bunches for five cents today;' and you take them.

"A Chinaman knows how to accumulate the cash. He will come into this country with nothing and go away with a bag of money as long as your arm.

"In the city they crowd into the smallest quarters and eat the cheapest food. Let them keep coming and they would take all the work and absorb all the wealth there is here; and we ain't keepin' 'em out either in

spite of our laws. One way or another they are constantly sneaking in. Each Chinaman has to be photographed to identify him, but they all took alike, and if you catch one of those that have slipped in, he'll show a photograph of some other Chinaman, and you can't tell but that it is of him.

"They are a thrifty people and an honest people, I'll say that for them. They stand by their bargains and always pay when they say they'll pay. I'd rather sell goods to a Chinese merchant than an American so far as finance goes. Some are millionaires. But they don't help develop the country. They don't invest here. All their money, sooner or later, goes back to China, and it's a big drain. That ain't where we're goin' to get hit the worst, though. The Chinese who do us the most harm are those that come to look around or to study. You see the Chinamen are cracker-jacks to imitate. Give 'em the chance and they'd steal all our ideas about machinery and how to do things in a modern way. Then they'd go back to China and start their manufactories, and we wouldn't be in it at all.

"There's no other race to which there's the same objection. Lots of Mexicans come in, and they're kind of a mean, treacherous class that don't like us any better than we like them; but they're lazy and shiftless, and their competition don't count. Then there's Indians. I ain't got no objection to them. The fact is they're



A main thoroughfare in Chinatown

nearer of kin to us than the Chinese, a good sight. The world has only three race divisions. There's the Caucasian, the Ethiopian and the Mongolian. The Indian ain't a Mongolian, is he? and he ain't an Ethiopian. So he must be a Caucasian."

I found a few of the Chinatown shops large and fine, and the goods in them were often expensive, rare, and delightfully original and charming in design. But for the most part the shops were small and not by any means prepossessing. Usually they had open fronts, and much of the stock was displayed on the sidewalk, and the walks were also made use of for the conducting of many minor industries such as cobbling and tinkering. I loitered about for hours watching the strange scenes. The people with their yellow visages and unfamiliar garments looked as if they had been exhumed from some prehistoric past. The men mostly wore black or dark blue. Often the women wore these colors likewise, but a good many had clothing as gay as a rainbow, and so did the children. The women went about bareheaded and their garments consisted of large loose-fitting blouses with huge sleeves and a pair of trousers of equally generous proportions.

The inhabitants included some persons of refinement and learning, and a considerable number of keen and successful business men; but the larger part were of the lower class. This, I suppose, is the reason why the

candlelight. When you were through you let go of your book which was hitched to a string from above, and it was drawn up out of the way. At the same time the candle swung back and an extinguisher dropped over it.

A somewhat similar subterranean shop was occupied by a very old man who had two mimic theatres fastened to his wall crowded with actors, one-half life size. He would set the mechanism going and the figures would bob their heads and move their hands in a most unearthly manner. He also had a wonder-stone, a polished disc about eighteen inches across and with many smoky stains in the rock. The old man pointed out in the stains a great number of figures—men, women and animals; but it was seldom I would make out the things he said he saw.

There were pawn-shops in Chinatown, and in the windows you were sure to see, among other articles, several opium pipes. Opium is less used than formerly, but opium dens still existed, and I wandered into one of them. Its entrance was at the back of a gloomy hallway. Within was a large apartment having a double tier of platforms at the sides on which were heaps of blankets and a few Chinamen sleeping or smoking. One ancient was lying on his side and toasting a bit of opium on the end of a slender stick over a little lamp. Then he crowded it into the orifice

The view across San Francisco Bay to Mt. Tamalpais



of his pipe and puffed away. Another fellow was smoking a water-pipe—that is, drawing tobacco fumes through a one-inch tube, two feet long, filled with water. This individual showed me various small trinkets which he said were very cheap because they had been smuggled in from abroad by friends. The Chinaman is not very particular about obeying laws that he can evade. He even holds slaves—for one alley was pointed out where, behind barred windows, the women slaves of this strange foreign community were kept.

My sojourn in San Francisco came to an end at length, and one evening in the early dusk I crossed the bay to go on by train to other regions. From the ferry-boat I looked back and saw the great city with its masts and towers and heights, gray and beautiful against the glow of the sunset sky. Lights were everywhere a-twinkle, and the beholder could not but be impressed with the greatness of the city—populous, rich, serene and powerful; and yet, one week later came the great earthquake and the fire that reduced this metropolis of the west coast to a blackened ruin.

NOTE.—The old San Francisco is no more, but the attraction of its situation will always remain, and the new tragedy in its stirring history adds greatly to the interest of the visitor. At about five o'clock of Wednesday morning, April 18, 1906, occurred the first great shock of that elemental calamity. It had been a beautiful night, and the

IX

A NEVADA TOWN WITH A PAST

THE International Hotel where I stopped was a big six-story building, imposing in size and in many of its appointments, but all gone to seed. It had been a very grand affair when it was erected. Its broad stairways, its heavy woodwork, its great windows with their lace curtains, its black walnut bedsteads and marble-topped bureaus, upholstered chairs and Brussels carpets all had an air of antique luxury. Time was when an apartment cost from two to five dollars a night. Now the prices are fifty cents and one dollar, and everything is battered and worn, and the whole building is almost ghostly in its loneliness, so few are the travellers who stop at the once busy hostelry. A Chinaman is the landlord, and he goes himself to meet the trains and carry his patrons' hand luggage up the steep hill to his hotel. The Palace, the Occidental and the other fine hotels have fared even worse than this one, and the streets are lined with buildings that in their day were genuinely impressive and probably as fine as any west of the Rockies.

Virginia City is indeed a strange town—a living skeleton. In the height of its opulence it boasted a population of thirty thousand. Today there are less than one tenth that many, and dilapidation and ruin are seen on every hand. The chief streets terrace along a great hillside. Farther up the slope are wastes of sagebrush growing in stunted clumps a foot or two high and half hiding the earth with their gray twigs and foliage. Down below is a valley where the mines have dumped vast heaps of waste. The entire region is a wild upheaval of hills, and around the horizon are seen ranges of snowy-topped mountains. Once in a while a gnarled scrub pine or dwarf cedar occurs, but only a few feet high. Formerly scrub pines of fair size were plentiful on the hills; but they were practically all used for firewood long years ago. After they were gone some Chinamen ran a woodyard and sold pine roots. Probably one hundred and fifty donkeys were engaged in toiling about the uplands and bringing in the stumps and roots of the old scrub pines. This material, too, was exhausted presently, and now the fuel comes by train.

If you look attentively you discover a little grass growing in the sagebrush. It gets a foothold about the roots of the brush and now and then starts a clump by itself. This is bunch-grass. The cattle relish it and they nose about after it where you would at first glance

184 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

think they could find nothing more palatable than the bitter sage. As the season advances thousands of sheep roam over the country, though the grass is always too scanty to make the landscape green.

In the town are a few poplar trees, and occasionally there are fruit trees in the gardens. But gardens are scarce and small. There is lack of soil and lack of moisture. The streets are rough and dirty, and as I walked about I was constantly encountering old tin cans and getting my feet tangled up in wires from the baled hay. On the main street in the busier portion is an almost continuous roofing over the broad sidewalks, and this serves the stores instead of awnings. The walks themselves are of plank that evidently date back into the town's ancient history. The knots and spikes protrude and the rest is deep hollowed by the passing of countless feet. Often streaks of sagebrush grow alongside the gutters, and these tenacious shrubs establish themselves wherever else in the village there are spaces untrodden and uncared for. Buildings in good repair are rarities. Those out of plumb are common, and some lean against one another for support, or are braced by long timbers. There are tottering fences and ragged walls and broken roofs and smashed glass, and many windows and doors are boarded up.

As I was rambling through the sagebrush below a house on the outskirts an old German came out and

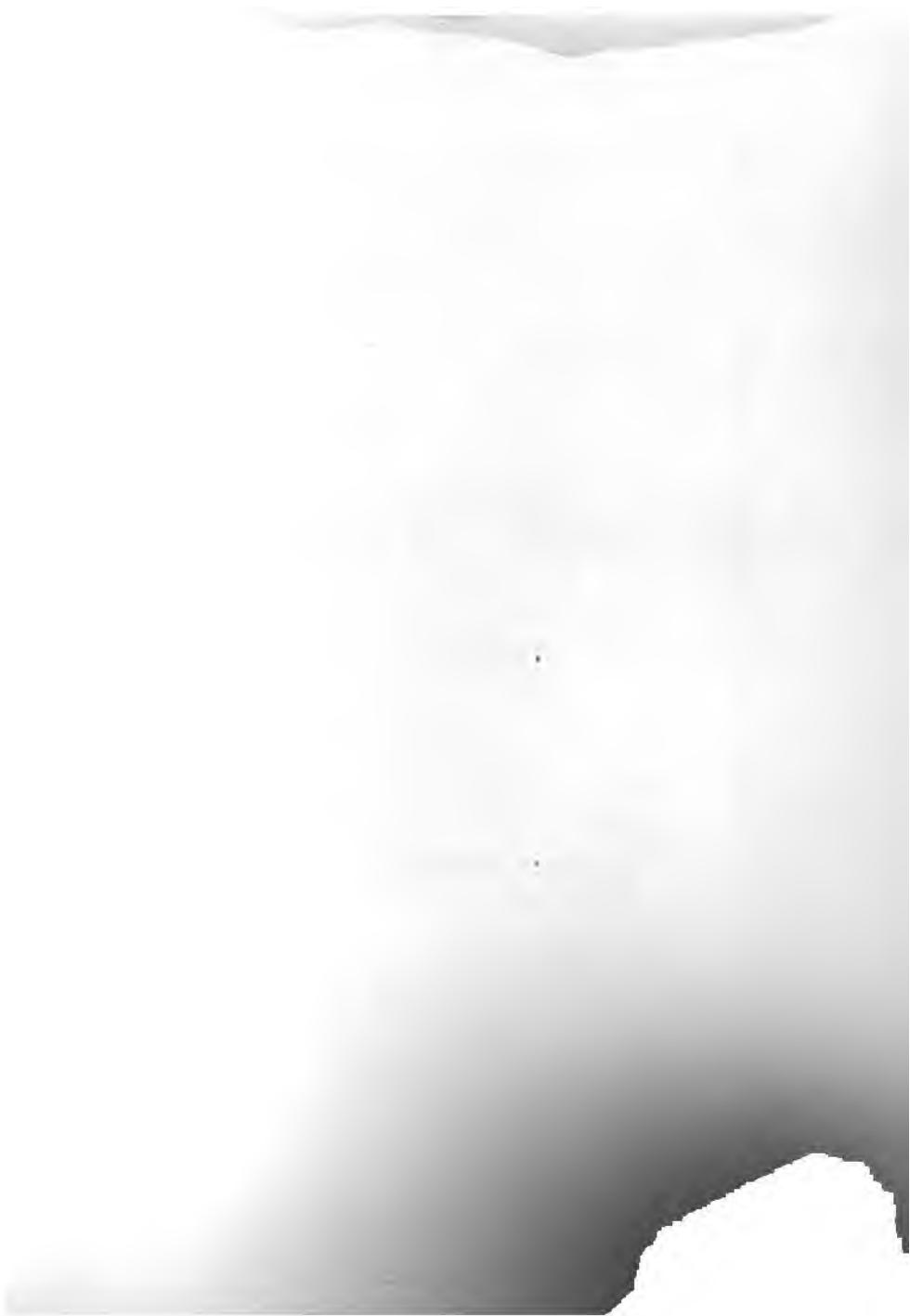
spoke to me. He was very friendly, and he became doubly so when he learned that I was from New England. "Dot New England haf caused me thirty-four years of trouble," said he with a humorous twinkle in his eyes. "It vas dere I got mine wife. I suppose you people back East are thinkin' we haf der world by der tail out here. I'm glad of dot. You used not to think we vas much. But the West haf been makin' some progress dese late years. I think, though, all of us here are, you might say, impregnated with minerals, and we want to get rich too fast. It would be better not to grab so much for ourself. Yes, although bein' of a fiery political nature, I want everyone to haf an equal share."

I resumed my walk and a little later stopped to chat with a small boy who was on horseback racing around a yard. He had an array of bottles and cans full of water set on a wall, and he would pick one up, canter to some other part of the enclosure and deposit it on a post. He said he was playing grocer and was delivering goods. I asked for directions to Gold Hill, and he slid off his horse and went along to show me the way. His name was Chester; "But the boys have got a nickname on me," he confided, "and call me Figs. My father works in a mine, but on Sundays he goes prospecting."

186 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

The search for gold has resulted in tearing the country all to pieces. Everywhere the hills are dotted with prospectors' holes. From any height you can see dozens—perhaps hundreds. They suggest the burrowing of woodchucks or prairie dogs. There is always quite a heap of dirt and broken rock on the downhill side. The region along the Comstock Lode abounds too in deserted shafts. Usually the spots where had been the buildings, and the machinery for working the abandoned mines, are now only marked by immense dumps of waste with possibly a few great foundation stones and irons. The shafts may be filled up, or they may be partially open. Figs pointed to one of these holes and said a boy pushed him into it and he had slipped and crawled in the darkness a long way. He thought he was lost and he cried; but at last he saw daylight ahead and he crept out at the bottom of the hill.

Figs had a mania for throwing stones. He tossed them down vacant shafts and heaved them at cows, roosters, water-puddles and anything else that happened to catch his eye. He evidently did not find life dull. "On Saturday," said he, "seven of us kids are goin' to the reservoir pond to have a swim. We'll like that—you betcher! There's ducks on the pond, and a feller that lives near it shoots 'em and lets us have 'em three for a quarter. We'll bring some home and have 'em for dinner the next day."





A prospector

The village of Gold Hill, two miles from Virginia City, is deader, if anything, than its neighbor. There is the same dilapidation and wreckage, and the same canting walls and neglect of repairs. Figs called my attention to the church steeple, and said, "That's goin' to fall pretty soon. It rocks like a cradle every time the wind blows hard."

On the outskirts of the hamlet I met a Scotchman who affirmed that his cabin was the oldest dwelling in the region. It was built in 1867. The main part contained a single room, but there was a leanto at the rear and a little cave ran back under the hill. The owner invited me in to rest myself and offered me a cup of whiskey, or, if I preferred, he would make me a cup of tea, coffee or chocolate. When we entered, a gray cat departed through a missing window-pane. The man said the cat was his pardner; "And I don't want any other," he affirmed. "If you have a *man* living with you he is too apt to smoke and drink and read too much and not attend to the cabin business. I been spendin' a year or two in the new gold region at Tonopah. I had to get away from there on account of my health. It's a desert country with not enough sagebrush growin' to shelter a jack-rabbit, and the water is bad—full of borax, soda and alkali. The Tonopah people been dyin' like sheep. Some of 'em, when they begin to feel sick go to Carson and boil a little of the alkali out of

188 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

their systems in the hot springs that are there. But I come here, and the first thing I knew I was in bed with the pleurisy. I had it in good shape, and pretty near died. The doctor said the cabin needed ventilation and he ordered that window-pane broke."

The cabin was very neat in spite of its small size. It was on the warm side of the hill and so was comfortable in winter, while the cavern annex was "as cool as an ice house" in the hottest days of summer. In fact, I judged that its occupant considered it an ideal residence. He was a prospector, and there had been times when he had made so much money he didn't know what to do with it. Nevertheless he had lost it "twice as fast as he made it."

That evening, at Virginia City, I dropped in at the office of the paper on which Mark Twain began his literary career as a reporter. There was no one behind the counter in the little front room, and I went on into the type-setting department—a high, grimy room with type-cases along the sides, and walls bedizened with big theatre posters. I was made welcome, and I sat down by a stove in the middle of the apartment. Two or three men were busy at the type, and their friends strolled in from time to time to look on, or chat, or warm themselves. Among the rest was one of the early settlers of the region, and I had a long talk with him. He looked as if he had shared the fate of the town. His

overcoat was greasy and faded, and he hobbled in aided by a cane, and his ragged beard was streaked with tobacco juice. I asked him how the town appeared when he first saw it.

After lifting the cover of the stove and spitting into the opening, he replied, "I come here in April, 1861, and I found just twenty-nine houses. The most important was a small wooden hotel where you paid a dollar a night and furnished your own blankets and slept on the floor. You had to pay a dollar, too, for a meal and it was no better than you get here now for twenty-five cents. What I counted as houses were none of them anything but shanties. Some of the people were living in tents, and some had run back a little drift under a hill and stretched over the hollow a green hide for a roof. The edges of the hide were made fast by laying on rocks. To shut in the front for the night you hung up a blanket. These dugouts were common for years.

"Ore was discovered in this region about three miles below by the Grosch brothers in 1858. It was a heavy black sulphite and in order to find out its value they started over the mountains for San Francisco to have some of it assayed. But the cold and the snow were too much for them, and one died on the way and the other died afterward from the exposure. The ore proved to be very rich in silver, and some nephews of theirs went back to where it was found. Other pros-

190 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

pectors poked around the neighborhood, too, and in 1859 two fellers named Mullins and Riley was lookin' at the croppings above here on this hill and discovered some heavy sort of rock they didn't understand. Comstock was still farther up the hill, and he see they'd found something, and he come and looked at it. He knew the ore was valuable and he bluffed 'em into givin' him a third right in the discovery. They staked out claims and that was the beginning of work here at the Comstock Lode. The really productive part of the lode is only about a mile long, and in thickness it varies from three or four feet to over a hundred. How deep it goes no one can say, but it doesn't pinch out as most lodes do after going down a short distance.

"At first there was no very great excitement, but by '61 people begun to come in pretty rapid on foot, on horseback, and in teams. That next winter was a terrible hard one. The snow was so drifted wagons couldn't get in with supplies, and wood was fifty dollars a cord and hay a hundred and fifty dollars a ton, and everything else equally expensive. But in the spring we had plenty once more. Until the railroad was built in 1869 our supplies come on ten and twelve-mule teams, and there got to be five lines of six-horse stages running into town. The railroad was a great job; for it wound around the mountains, and over the hills, and through tunnels and all that; but with the wealth



The tinker



there was here they'd have built a railroad up a tree if necessary.

"People come faster than ever when the railroad was done and we had here the biggest mining camp the world ever saw. However, it wasn't the prospectors who staked out the early claims who made the big fortunes. They sold out and traded off and started again. I knew Comstock well. He was a man of some education, big-hearted and good-natured—a man who would never do wrong to anyone except himself. Another person very much like Comstock was 'Old Virginia,' as we called him, the man this town was named after. I've seen those two lying on the floor under the influence of liquor and the twenty dollar gold pieces rolling out of their pockets.

"In those days everybody had money. I used to make five hundred dollars a month myself. Part of it I earned as leader of a brass band. There were four of us, and we got twenty dollars apiece to play at a ball, five dollars apiece at a serenade, and ten dollars each at a funeral. The brass band was always at the funerals. We played a funeral march on the way to the cemetery, a dirge at the grave, and a quickstep comin' back.

"One of the first times I ever saw Mark Twain was at a ball where I was playing. He'd got a little step-ladder for a seat, and he kept joggling me as he moved it around to get a better sight of the people. So I finally

192 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

up with my cornet and blew a blast in his ear. He left the hall then, and the next day he tried to get even by giving me a good hot write-up in his newspaper. But we met afterward, and he treated me to a drink and things were all right. That was the only time I ever saw the color of his money, though I suppose he's drank one hundred and fifty dollars worth of whiskey at my expense. What he did with the salary he earned I can't imagine. I never knew him to gamble nor buy mining property. He had plenty of chances to make his fortune, but he was afraid to invest five cents.

"Most of us were pretty easy in money matters. If we made a lucky strike we laid off to enjoy ourselves. A man might be rich today and dead broke tomorrow. You probably have met men about town since you've been here who are fortunate now to earn a living, but who have been worth a great many thousands of dollars. Comstock died poor. He went to Montana where he wound up by putting a six-shooter to his ear, after having returned to his tent disappointed in a prospecting tour. There's thousands and thousands of prospectors' holes dug that never reveal any sign of good ore, and there's lots of mines that are worth nothing except to sell to Eastern investors. The chance of outsiders making anything in western mines is pretty slim. If a mine is a profitable property we prefer to own it ourselves, and if we sell stock in such a mine it's usual

to dig out some of the best ore to show and boom the price till we've disposed of what stock there is for sale. Then we work some poor portion of the mine so the outsiders think it is worthless and sell back their stock at almost nothing. Afterward we get at the richer parts again and make money for ourselves. I suppose it's likely, if you were to figure up the capital invested which fails to be profitable, and the unrewarded labor and the other expenses, it has cost more to find and get the gold and silver in this Western country than the metals mined have been worth.

"But the possibilities are alluring. To show the chances—I knew two fellows from Indiana who rode in here on horseback one morning, staked out claims, and in the afternoon sold out on the street for three thousand dollars apiece. That was more money than they'd ever seen where they came from. They thought they was rich, and they left for home. Another fellow traded an old plug of a horse for an interest in a mine and sold out a little later for four hundred thousand dollars. Then there was Sandy Bowers. He got hold of a claim a few feet wide, and there was a woman had a small claim joining his. They got married, and pretty soon it was found their claims covered a little mountain of gold. It was in the hollow above the village of Gold Hill, and that was what gave the place its name. The gold was taken out and Sandy sold his interest,

and was immensely rich. In order to enjoy his wealth he built himself a mansion about twenty miles from here over in the Washoe Valley—country where it is about as bare of everything but sagebrush as it is around Virginia City, and he became known as the ‘Sagebrush Crœsus.’ He spared no expense in putting up his house, and it was of cut stone and cost half a million. The door-knobs and hinges were of solid silver, and there was everything else to match. Most of the furniture he imported from Europe because there wasn’t any fine enough to be had on this side of the Atlantic. They had a ten thousand dollar library, though neither Sandy nor his wife could read or write; but the bindings looked well. They bought an expensive piano, though they knew no more about music than a pig does. Of course they had to have what they called statuary, even if it was made of plaster-of-Paris. Whoever sold them the stuff didn’t lose anything. When they opened up their house they had a big feast and invited all their friends, and the oysters that was served were from Philadelphia and cost a dollar and a half apiece.

“For a time they lived in grand style, as nearly as they could copy it; but they speculated in stocks and lost all they had. Sandy died, and was so poor at the time he hadn’t the money to buy a single silver hinge of his fine mansion. His wife became a fortune-teller in San Francisco, and was called ‘the Washoe Seeress.’

"It's astonishing, the wealth that's been taken from this little strip of rough country here. One shaft alone has yielded two hundred and seventy millions. The men that got the bulk of the money from that hole were what we speak of as 'The Big Four'—Flood and O'Brien and Fair and Mackey. The first two were saloon-keepers in San Francisco, and the others worked up here at the mines. They just happened to invest in the right thing, and they hung on. Why, I remember when Mackey was getting three dollars and a half a day while I was getting four.

"Very little of the fortunes that have been made in the Comstock have been spent in the state of Nevada. The millionaires prefer to live in San Francisco or New York or Europe. Nevada furnishes the money, but is left poor. However, for the first few years this town was full of wealth. There was gamblers here that had two or three hundred thousand at a time, and if a church was to be built, or other public work to be done they were the heaviest contributors. They made their money easier than anybody else, and they gave more freely. But money doesn't stay with a gambler. If he lives long enough he ends in poverty.

"For some years there was considerable lawlessness, and the fellow who could draw his pistol first was the best man. But, as a whole, this was a good place to live in then—always lots goin' on and the streets so crowded

nights you could hardly get along. Everything was prosperous and promising when in October, 1875, about five o'clock one morning a gentleman threw a lighted lamp at a woman he had some difference with and unluckily missed his aim and set the house on fire. A gale was blowing and that fire swept right through the town and burned all the business section and three-fourths of the homes, and the churches and millions of feet of heavy timber to be used in bracing the walls of the mines when the ore was taken out. The people in the burned district had about all they wanted to do to escape with what they had on, and very little was saved. For a while no sort of adequate shelter could be had for most of the homeless, and many families would just stretch blankets over the sagebrush and crawl under. We went to work at once to rebuild, and forty-five trains a day came in from Carson bringing grub and supplies. But the city was never the same afterward. The buildings were thrown up in a hurry, and they don't stand the test of time. Pretty soon the town began to dwindle down, and a good many of the mines were abandoned. As they got deeper they became more difficult to work, and there was serious trouble with hot water in them, and, besides, the price of silver had dropped. A few mines are still in operation and are adding to their owners' wealth, and there is some prospect that things may be brighter in the future; but Virginia City will never again be what it was."



Making firewood of the sagebrush

When I left the old mining camp I went to Carson, the capital of the state. The place is on the level floor of a wide valley and looks like a country village. There is some moisture here and with the help of irrigation the place is an oasis amid the almost interminable barrens of sagebrush round about. The inhabitants number somewhat over two thousand, and there is a long main street of small stores, hotels and saloons, back of which are other streets lined with residences, mostly a story or a story and a half high; but the houses have fruit trees and green grass about them, and the streets are lined with Lombardy poplars which guard the public ways like arboreal sentinels standing in martial array, shoulder to shoulder.

Everyone talked mines and ore, and of fortunes made and lost. Such talk was especially ripe at the time of my visit because there were reports of a great discovery twenty-five miles distant, where two brothers by the name of Ramsey had been prospecting for over a year. We understood that they had found some wonderful ledges which assayed as much as twelve thousand dollars a ton. With the first rumors men from all the region around started for the new El Dorado. It was even said that one of the railroad trains had been deserted by its crew who stampeded to the gold fields. The spot was a canyon off in the desert, and whoever went had to carry supplies for himself and horses.

200 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

dwindle very rapidly. Thus far, in its three days of notoriety, probably five thousand dollars had been spent by the prospectors who rushed to the canyon, while not five cents worth of ore had been brought away.

Round about Carson, at intervals in the valleys, were groups of ranch buildings, usually sheltered by a little grove of cottonwoods. The cottonwoods were to some degree a source of fuel supply and were every few years cut back and allowed to grow out again. However, most of the wood that was burned seemed to be the sagebrush. It looked like poor stuff, but I was assured it made a hot fire. The stems were sometimes as large as one's arm, though soon dividing into a brush of twigs, and the bushes were seldom over three or four feet high. If the farmers went back into the mountains they could get scrub pine; but they would do this only to sell it in the town where it was worth nine dollars a cord.

In both Virginia City and Carson, Indians were frequently seen on the streets; but they seldom appeared to have any very definite business there. It was as if they had come to dream amid a civilization they could not comprehend. Sometimes several would sit in the sunshine on the curbing and stay purposeless a long time, or a dozen or more might gather in a waste lot, some sitting, some lying down, some standing waiting in a seemingly vacant-minded way till the inclination

A deserted wigwam



came to go elsewhere. The men's garments were modern, and so were the women's gowns; but the feminine portion of the race, both old and young, delighted in gay shawls, and in bright colored kerchiefs which they wore over their heads. The women were fat and stumpy and moved along with an awkward waddle. Sometimes one would have a papoose on her back, strapped to a board that had a hood-like projection above, from beneath which the little one looked out, silent and watchful.

On the outskirts of Carson amid the sagebrush I happened on a little Indian village of a half dozen families. I approached one of the houses—a low, rude shanty, and suddenly a dog made a rush and grabbed me by the leg. I kicked, and a small Indian boy came and drove the cur around the house with a switch. Near the dwelling was an open-sided shed just large enough to shelter the wagon which was underneath. Every Indian family in the region aspired to own a wagon. They usually bought one second-hand at a cost of from fifteen to twenty-five dollars, and they took better care of it than of any of their other belongings. A wagon shed is perhaps exceptional, but they at least cover it from the sun and rain with sacking.

Except for the shanty I have mentioned, the habitations of the village were wigwams—conical frameworks of sticks covered with canvas. The cabin had a

202 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

floor and a stove; but in the wigwams the fire was made in the center on the ground, and the smoke escaped through a hole in the peak. Of course, a good deal of smoke lingers inside, and as a result the older Indians, especially the squaws, are apt to be blind. Not far from each dwelling was a half circle made by heaping up sagebrush in a thick hedge. This served as a wind break, and within its shelter the squaws like to sit and weave their baskets and do other work.

A half mile distant was a deserted camp, and for many rods about, the earth was strewn with boards and sticks, broken crockery, tin cans, bottles, pieces of carpeting, pots, pails and baskets and broken tools, and there were shoes galore, the ruins of a mattress and various articles of clothing. One or two of the wigwams were nearly complete. A man who lived in the vicinity told me that the camp had been abandoned on account of the death of a squaw. "You see," said he, "they think that the squaw's spirit will be comin' back and kickin' things over, and they always move every time anyone dies. They'll even leave a good wooden house. Often they go only a short distance, but they wouldn't stay in the same place. It seems to be their idea that the spirit will only harbor around within a few feet or rods of the hut where the person died."

"The Indians are queer in a good many ways. They don't like to have their photographs taken, and

if a person comes near their homes with a camera they will go into the hut and shut the door, and they won't poke their heads out till the photographer goes away. Their notion is that the person who gets their picture has power to make them do whatever he pleases. They believe he could cause their death, if he chose to. There's a man in Carson got a picture of a papoose, and the child died. He da'sn't let the Indians know he has that picture. The squaw mother would kill him.

"They used to think that the white man's medicine would be fatal to 'em; and they still depend to some extent on their own superstitious methods of healing. A young squaw here lately had the pneumonia. My wife went and see her and said she was pretty badly off. But the medicine man come and give her some boiled herbs, and the Indians was there from miles around. They stayed all night and had a devil of a powwow, crying and hollering to keep the squaw's soul from takin' flight, and I'll be darned if she didn't get well.

"When a white man lies down to sleep he always covers his feet and keeps his head out; but, do you know, an Indian does just the opposite. He covers his head every time. If he has only a small piece of blanket his head will be wound up in it, even if all the rest of his body is exposed."

I mentioned to the man my experience with the Indian dog, and he remarked, "Well, there's no serious

208 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

bark on, and much is to be seen of humanity and nature in this district that is a revelation to the average traveller.

Easier of access, and with another sort of attraction is Lake Tahoe on the dividing line between Nevada and California. It is only a fifteen-mile ride on a narrow-gauge road from Truckee on the main line. At the end of this ride you find the best of hotel accommodations, and a wilderness lake some twenty miles long and twelve broad surrounded by forests and snow-capped mountains. The lake is more than six thousand feet above the sea level, and is marvelously deep and crystal clear. There are many lesser lakes in the vicinity and foaming cascades, and good hunting and fishing. The region is at its best in the late summer and autumn. One can judge of the virtues of the lake from the fact that Mark Twain, who spent some time on its shores, says, "Three months of camp life on Lake Tahoe would restore an Egyptian mummy to his pristine vigor and give him an appetite like an alligator."

The white peaks of Mt. Shasta



X

AMONG THE SHASTA FOOTHILLS

IT WAS eleven o'clock at night, and I had just stopped off at a little railway station in Northern California. The station was not lighted and when the train rumbled away I was left blinking in the uncertain darkness. I looked this way and that for some sign of habitation and saw none. Looming against the northern sky rose a grim black peak, an almost perfect pyramid, strangely regular and vast and near. In the east rose another pyramid mountain mass, ghostly white with eternal snows. That I knew was Shasta. I began exploring the lonely void around and presently discovered a man with a lantern on the other side of the station. This man was good enough to act as my guide, and he piloted me across the road to a story-and-a-half hotel hidden among some trees. Then he went his way. The building was dark and silent. I stepped up on the piazza and after rapping again and again without avail reinforced my blows with shouts of "Hello!"

212 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"It's said that if you get a good fat rattlesnake and try out the oil, that oil is a wonderful cure for rheumatism," remarked one of the lodgers. "You rub it on and take it internally, both."

"I'm not scared of snakes," declared the hired girl, gazing meditatively at the dark stony height. "I'd just as soon tackle 'em as not; but I don't want anything to do with a mouse. Mice are creatures I can't stand. I can dance for a week if I see a mouse runnin' around the room. Yes, you bet I can!"

"I ain't stuck on seein' mice or snakes either," said the landlady; "but I think the varmints back on Shasta are worse than the snakes."

Then she told how, occasionally, a brown bear was captured and wildcats shot, and how right there at the hotel they sometimes would hear a California lion roar, or the coyotes yelping. In the midst of her observations she came to a sudden stop and chased out an old hen that had walked into the house and was looking around. "That there hen has got to change its habits!" she announced. "For two days it has laid an egg on my bed, and I won't have such doin's."

The hens were laying very well, at present, she said, only they often stole nests off in the manzanita shrubs and thorny "sticker-bushes" where she could not find the eggs.



The well at the back door

The place where I was stopping was a woodland mill village clustering about some big red box-factory buildings with their piles of boards. Some of the houses were substantial cottages, but most were little shacks of unplaned boards that in themselves and in their surroundings were extremely unprepossessing. Their occupants were mostly "Eye-talians." There were no gardens, no green grass—only ragged forest of brush and stumps and brown gritty earth. All the vicinity had been cleared of its good timber.

One odd feature of the village was its ovens. Under a shed adjoining nearly every house was a plank platform on which was built a dome-like cavern of stones and cement. In this a fire is made, and when it has burned down to embers it is raked out, and the loaves of bread are put in and the opening closed. The heat the oven has absorbed from the fire does the baking.

In my walks I often heard the weird honking of wild geese, and when I turned my eyes upward I would see a flock of the great birds with outstretched necks winging their swift way northward. Sometimes there would be no more than a dozen, and again there would be scores. They flew in a more or less V-shaped formation, and it was an inspiring sight to see them ploughing along the blue field of heaven. Frequently two or three flocks were in sight at the same time.

216 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

brook with several other cans and pails which he also cleansed and put in order. One of them he filled from the stream and set on the fire to boil for the coffee. Last of all he went into the neighboring woods and gathered an armful of fallen branches, broke them up and adjusted the pieces on a rough circle of stones that served for a fireplace.

"Now," said the cook, "we want some ladles."

"All right," responded the other, "I never seen the time when I couldn't jump into the bush and make a set of kitchen tools in about fifteen minutes, if I was real hungry."

He got out his jackknife, selected some pieces of wood that suited his purpose, and soon had fashioned two rough paddles. Besides the potatoes, or "spuds" as they called them, the cook prepared two large onions and fried a good-sized piece of steak. He had some little packages of salt and pepper which he drew on for flavoring. The work was done with a good deal of deftness, but it took considerable time. However, he said that preparing the food was not nearly so much of a task as getting it in the first place.

"What'll you have for a plate?" asked the cook, turning to his pard.

"Here's a flat tin dish that'll do," replied the older man, "only I must burn it out first."



Hoboes getting dinner

When everything was ready the cook put half the great mess of potatoes and onions into the burned-out dish, together with half the steak, while he reserved his share in the frying-pan. Then a loaf of bread was taken out of a parcel and the two sat down on some oil-cans turned bottom upward and ate in great contentment.

"This is a pretty spot," observed the older man, "and I always do like to eat where I can hear the sound of running water."

They did not pause till the last morsel was gone, and I imagine it was the only square meal they had that day. After it was done, one got out his pipe and the other his chewing tobacco. They had some thought of applying for work in the local mills. If they decided to go on to other regions they would travel by train. Often they were permitted to ride on a freight train in return for helping the train crew with their work. If permission was refused they stowed themselves away somewhere, in or about the cars. Very likely they would get put off. Usually this was done at some stop the train made, and the hobo then spoke of himself as "being ditched." Occasionally the train men would push a hobo off while the train was going, and in the hobo's phraseology he then "hit the grit." At times they sneaked a ride on a passenger coach—perhaps up on top or on the platform of the "blind baggage"

218 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

coach next to the tender, or perhaps rode seated on the trucks down beneath the cars. "It ain't a bad place under there," declared the older man, "when the dust don't fly too bad, and I've seen trains carryin' more passengers on the trucks than was in the coaches."

"I told you I'd been to every state in the Union," said the younger man. "Besides that I've been to Honolulu and to Mexico. Mexico is called the land of tomorrow. It's the motto of that country never to do today what you can put off till the next day, and California is just the same. That's the effect of the climate, I suppose, and I won't dispute but what the climate is fine. However, if you want a hobo tourist's idea of California, I'd say that this state is nine-tenths climate and one-tenth business. The hobo that wants to come to a starvation country had better come here. Instead of eating three meals a day he gets only one meal in three days. They call this God's country, but I tell you the devil has the whole thing in hand.

"When I came out here as a young man affairs went well with me for a time and I got to own two good ranches. Yes, I made barrels of money. Then come a dry year and everything run behind. My stock was starving and I shot forty of my horses to put 'em out of misery. Others I sold to a rich ranchman at a dollar a head. The best of 'em he shipped to Nevada to graze, and the rest he killed and fed to his hogs. In

addition to losing by the drouth I speculated in mining stocks and kept sending good money after bad till I lost all I had.

"This state is overrated. People back East hear about the fruit and the sunshine and the flowers the year around, and the railroads advertise, and the land sharks tell how this is the finest spot on earth to really enjoy livin', and that when a person dies here he gets a ticket right from this glorious climate straight up into heaven with no change of cars. Lots of Eastern people believe this is all as represented. A family comes early in the year from the snows and frosts of their home winter. Here things are green, and the real estate agent knows the new-comers are green too. He shows 'em a place, and says, 'Now this is a nice ranch, and you can raise anything in the world on it. The price is so and so. We're almost giving it away, as it were, but we want intelligent liberal people of your class to settle here.'

"The man's wife, she looks around, and she says, 'Just see the sunshine, and the oranges, and all those roses. I guess we'd better have it.'

"So the man buys. But in a year or two there's a change in his sentiments, and the wife ain't quite satisfied. She gets to longin' for the East, and she speaks to her husband and tells him things don't seem to be just as they was represented. That's what he thinks, too, and he's ready to do whatever he can to please her;

so he goes to the agent he bought of and says he wants to sell.

"‘Why, it’s foolish to do that,’ the agent says.
‘Prices have dropped and at present you’d lose.’

“But the man wants to quit, and the agent makes him an offer. ‘The way things are now,’ he says, ‘that’s the best I can do.’ .

“The man sells and goes back East where he come from a few thousand dollars poorer than when he left. The neighbors ask how it happens he didn’t stay, and he tells ‘em, ‘They don’t have snow out there, and that’s about the only unpleasant feature they lack.’

“You talk up California to any people in the East who have lived out here and they’ll run you off the place. Irrigation is the only salvation for this West Coast land; and, by the way, did you ever notice how the natives spit to help out the work of the streams? I chew tobacco myself, but I ain’t a savage. The tobacco users in this country act as if they owned the air, and the floors of public buildings and railroad cars, not to mention the earth. They are irrigating all the time wherever they are, indoors and out, till a decent man is disgusted.

“They say it is dreadful easy to make a livin’ in the fruit business, but I tell ‘em I ain’t seen anyone knockin’ oranges out of the trees with a gold brick—no, not a single instance of that kind. It’s claimed that the San

Joaquin Valley is one of the most fertile valleys in the world, and so it is in spots. But watch out for the hardpan. That is the great backfall in this country. Often the soil lies so thin on top of it that it's just about worthless. Horned toads wouldn't live on it. But the people in this country are what you call flimflammers, or, in other words, four-flushers. They lay off that hardpan desert into fruit ranches and induce people to leave their happy homes in the East to settle on it. A Californian expects you to give him all the money you've got and thank him for taking it. He sticks you with that land, and you build a shanty on it and put up a windmill and supply the wind yourself. Sheep can barely exist on the soil, and it won't raise white beans.

"Do you know about the mosquitoes? You walk along the Sacramento or the San Joaquin rivers, and the mosquitoes rise in swarms and follow you in droves; and there's terrible malaria in those valleys. Lots of ranchers have to go to the seashore in the summer to spend a couple of months, and you'd be surprised to see how wrinkly and dark and sick they look. Some owners, just in self-defense, lease their land to the Chinamen and live in the city themselves. Chinamen don't have malaria. They are very careful. They scrape their tongues at night with a piece of wood. I've watched 'em, and they bathe their feet before goin' to bed. They always boil their drinkin' water, too,

"Well, I've got even with a few of 'em for their meanness," said the older hobo. "I've done quite a little canvassing out here, and if I'm sober I have a very good address and can make good money. One spell I put in selling nice gold watches for twenty dollars, or perhaps eighteen. They cost me three. Another while I sold harness-dressing that I manufactured myself. I'd explain how it would make the leather soft and pliable and increase the durability, and I did well. Once I had twenty-seven hundred dollars ahead, but it seemed to get away from me. I never was inclined to hoard my money, and I could never save what I earned for more than a short time.

"My best profit came from a home dressmaking pattern. It was a kind of a disk made to look like leather and there were holes punched in it. They cost me fifty cents and was marked five dollars, but I told people that the manufacturers allowed me to introduce 'em at two-fifty. They sold quick, and often people who didn't buy would have me make a pattern for which they'd pay fifty cents. I could most always get feed for my horse and lodging for myself free by making a few patterns at the ranches where I stopped.

"But it's much harder to sell to a California woman than it is to an Eastern woman. The climate seems to have a tendency to make people nervous and crazy. A woman here is always in a fidget, and at the same



Washing day

time she may not be doing anything; and there's no use whatever tryin' to transact business with 'em after noon. You couldn't sell a California woman a twenty dollar gold piece for a nickel then. She either wants to take a nap, or to go out on the street to display her finery."

Two other hobo couples now arrived in the grove. They had parcels of food under their arms, and began dinner preparations. Each couple had their own fire, and did their housekeeping separately, but there was a friendly interchange of certain portions of the bill of fare. One party lacked coffee and bread. These things were supplied by the other, which in return received some bacon fat to fry eggs in, and several other small items. One of my earlier acquaintances got out a piece of soap and washed his hands and face in a pail of warm water. Then he went to the stream and washed an extra shirt he carried, and hung it on the bushes. Lastly, he shaved himself. In the sheltered glade loitering among the shadows of the grove with its carpet of pine needles, and lulled by the gentle warmth of the weather and by the singing stream the hobo life had a flavor quite alluring. Certainly the hoboes themselves seemed content and even happy.

The next morning the crown of the mighty Shasta was hidden by mists, and my landlady said, "It's an

226 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

old Indian sign that when there's a cloud-cap on Shasta, 'he talkee storm.'"

Sure enough, the weather was threatening all day, and we had sprinkles of rain and could see the snow-squalls whirling across the white mountain wastes. The hired girl looked from the back door up at the wild clouds hovering about the giant mountain, and said, "I told 'em yesterday it was goin' to storm, and I've come out a winner."

Though Shasta's topmost peak is 14,400 feet above the sea-level the climb to it is not especially difficult or dangerous, and many persons make the ascent every year. July and August are the best months for this, as then the weather is sure to be good and there is comparatively little snow. The climbers and their guide drive up to the timber line and camp for the night. At three the next morning they leave their horses and go the rest of the way on foot. Five hours of ascent takes them to the top, and they have ample time to look off on the world below, and to descend by night-fall to the village whence they started. The entire cost for parties of ten or more is five dollars each. For a single person the charge is twenty dollars.

The mountain with its hoary peaks and its shaggy base is always impressive, and one is reminded of the Alps; yet it lacks something of their charm, for there you have a mystery of atmosphere you seldom get in

our land, and the vales about are pastoral and gentle. Then, too, there are rustic homes and quaint villages and peasant life in keeping, or in interesting contrast with the scene. But in America the foreground is only wilderness or ruined forest, blasted by the ravages of the lumbermen, and the buildings are unsightly saw-mills, and temporary shacks for the help, and if there is a village it is altogether crude and unromantic.

NOTE.—The Shasta region is a land for the lover of the beautiful with the pioneer instinct. There is fishing and hunting and mineral springs and the most impressive of scenery. Many resorts have come into existence in the neighborhood where one can stop with entire comfort, such as Sisson, Mott, Shasta Springs, and Crag View. The climb to the summit of the white peak affords an exhilarating experience, and the acquaintance one makes with the wilderness around is certain to leave many pleasant memories.

XI

OREGON FARM LIFE

I WAS at a scattered village in a wide alluvial valley that was bordered by irregular wooded hills. Spring had arrived some time before, and the new leafage was well started, the grass was getting ankle high, dandelions, violets and buttercups were in bloom, and the garden posies were opening out around the homes. Most of the orchards were past their blossom season, but the apple trees were blushing in full splendor. Men were ploughing and harrowing, and some were planting corn, and some were hoeing their garden patches, where, though it was only mid-April, the peas, lettuce, cabbages and other things were all green and thriving, and the strawberries were beginning to shed their first petals.

A variety of produce was raised in the region, but the great prune orchards were especially noticeable. About the barns were numerous hogs and calves, and in the pastures were grazing flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. There were large fields of wheat, and of oats and vetch sowed together, and of alfalfa. In the depths

of the valley flowed Cow Creek, an innocent-looking stream just then, but showing signs in the gullies neighboring that it was a wild and wide-reaching torrent in flood-time. During the high water many of the out-lying farmers are cut off entirely from the village, and others can get to it only by keeping to the high ground and crossing fields and climbing fences.

The prosperous serenity of the country was attractive, but scarcely stimulating, and when somebody chanced to speak of a place, six miles back in the hills, named Canyonville, I was eager to see it and visions of wild and picturesque beauty floated through my mind. I started in the early afternoon and tramped the dusty road in the warm sunshine up and down an endless succession of little hills. Sometimes I was amid farm fields, or pastures, sometimes in the sober fir forest. In the more open pastures grew occasional oak trees, their limbs raggedly fringed with moss. Occasionally there were thickets of chaparral frosted thickly over with blossoms, and humming full of bees. The little lizards were out enjoying the sunshine, but at my approach would scud to shelter with a quick rustle through the dry leaves. The birds sang, and far aloft in the sky sailed some stately buzzards.

When I reached Canyonville the day was drawing to a close, and the cows were drifting in from their pasture. The place was a small trading center. It did

230 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

not look very flourishing; for the main street was grass-grown, and many of the little stores on either side were vacant and had their windows boarded up. The most conspicuous of the village buildings were two diminutive churches, perched on the same knoll, both dilapidated, and one never had been painted. However, the hamlet, taken as a whole, in its setting of steep, fir-clad hills was quite delightful.

I found lodging at the Overland Hotel, the only hotel in the place, but there was a stumpy, two-story building down the street that was formerly a rival. Latterly it had been used as a dwelling, though its sign was still up—"The Grand Central." "More name than house," one of the villagers remarked, and really, one would hardly expect so impressively named a hostelry in a remote country village.

Like nearly all the buildings on the main street, whether shops or residences, my hotel stood snug to the board walk and had a piazza roof reaching out along the whole width of the front over the walk below. The piazza floor served as a sidewalk, but it also served the inmates of the hotel as a support for their chairs when they chose to sit in the open air. There I established myself soon after I arrived and rested and looked about. On the opposite side of the street was a group of boys squabbling playfully. They would snatch off each others' hats and give them a throw, and this

At the gate



seemed to entertain them until one hat was tossed up on a roof. The roof was low, and by standing on a window ledge and clinging to the eaves the owner of the hat with the aid of a stick poked it off. Then he jumped down to the ground. A comrade laid hold of the hat again, but the owner became savagely belligerent and exclaimed, "You let loose o' there you dirty idiot, or I'll hit you with this stick."

That put a damper on the game and brought it to an end. The stout, elderly landlady of the hotel had come to the door. She called one of the boys over to her and said, "Roy, how's the folks?"

"Oh, they're pretty well," he replied.

"You don't look like you been workin' none," she continued. "I wish you'd go to your house and bring me a few pounds o' butter."

As he moved off she said to me, "His people make good butter, though it's claimed that the creamery here makes the best. The old fashioned country butter ain't to be depended on. I've got three cows myself, but I use all the milk and cream. The only thing I don't like about the cows is that I have to do my own milking. Women do a good deal of the milking around here."

"This is a nice place to live. You can't get rich; but even if you could, I don't know that you could take any more with you when you died."

After supper, when the cows had been milked and the other work done, the hotel family both transient and permanent, gathered about the office stove, and as it was now dusky, Ella, the hired girl, lit the lamp. The evening was chilly, and one of the men spoke approvingly of the warmth that came with genial vigor from the little stove.

"Well," remarked the landlady, "you can always depend on Ella to make a good hot fire, because the girl who does that is sure to get a smart husband."

"That reminds me," said a teamster who was a local lodger, "I heard yesterday that Ed Slossen had married the Widow Weaver."

"What in the world is he thinkin' of!" cried the landlady. "She's old enough to be his mother. He must be a-losin' his mind."

"I guess he had a likin' for the old lady's farm," responded the teamster. "All the people up the valley where she lives have got fine places. Their buildings are good and their land is all fertile and easily handled. Down this way most every ranch is mortgaged, but up there they own their places clear. I'd like a good ranch myself; and yet if I had the money I don't suppose I'd buy one. You can't get a really first-class ranch for less than ten thousand dollars, and I don't know of any such in the county that will pay four per cent. on the price asked."

"I'd hate to ranch up where the Weaver place is," said another of the party. "It's too far from any village."

"Most every place has its faults," commented the teamster. "You know where my brother lives. That's nice country, but I wouldn't live there on account of the water, though they say those that get used to it like it and don't want any other. They would just naturally starve to death if they couldn't get some of that old sour mineral water to drink. It's worse even than city water. I tell you, in summer, city water is as warm as dishwater and don't quench your thirst at all. Hain't that so?"

"Talkin' about mortgages," said the other man, "I've imagined when I was drivin' along that I could tell every place that wasn't paid for by the look o' the buildings. Lots o' men would do better to let their land go to the holder of the mortgage and pay crop rent instead of interest. That's what I been tellin' Albert Lannagan he'd better do."

"Albert used to have a good stake," observed the teamster, "but he don't have the knack o' keepin' what he has like his father did."

"That was once a great ranch for apples," continued the other speaker; "but there ain't been no right good apples in Oregon for twenty years. The old orchards have all failed like on account of the San José scale.

234 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

However, I don't believe we could equal the Eastern apples anyway. Apples are a cold climate fruit. Last year our crop was ruined by that hot day we had. The thermometer went up to 108, and, in addition, the wind blew hard, and every apple was scalded on the windward side. There's one thing about it—we don't have to hurry pickin' 'em for fear of frost. I've seen apples hangin' on the trees perfectly good at Christmas."

"I was readin' in the paper that Oregon apples beat the world," remarked a man who had not spoken before.

"Oh, that ain't so at all," affirmed the teamster. "They don't compare with those back in Michigan where I come from."

"I don't believe you're a good judge," the other retorted. "When a feller is young he has an appetite for fruit, and it never tastes the same afterward."

"That ain't the case with me," responded the teamster. "I enjoy fruit as well as ever I did. When it comes to apples I'm like the boy that set out to eat a barrel of sugar. He e't all he could and quit."

"When I was a boy," said the other, "it used to be a great thing to go off in the woods and have a chicken roast. Some of the boys would steal the chickens. If I'd done that and my father had found it out there wouldn't have been enough left of me to tell the story. We used to take our own chickens. But I remember soon after I and my wife was married, two young brothers of hers



The milkmaids

come in one evening with some chickens they'd stolen and wanted 'em cooked for them to have a picnic. 'Boys,' said I, 'I'll tell you right now you won't get them chickens cooked in this house. You've stole 'em and they may make you trouble. Best thing you c'n do is to say nothing to nobody and throw 'em out over the back fence.'

"So that was what they did. Then they went home, and pretty soon I stepped out and picked up the chickens. They were dead, and there was no use o' wastin' 'em, and my wife cooked 'em. The boys ate some o' those same chickens; but they never did know that the chickens wa'n't ours. I'd learned 'em a lesson. If I had let 'em go on as they'd started there's no knowin' what they would have done later."

"I wish business would pick up here," said the landlady. "There's nothing a-doing much in the woods since the timber cruisers got into trouble. They have been havin' this racket over them a good while now. The government ain't a-goin' to allow them to be smugglin' the forest any more, and that's kind o' stopped business a little bit. It wa'n't many years ago this place supported six or seven saloons. Now it's prohibition. Oh, it used to be a good deal more lively."

"I can mention one thing we ain't gone back much on," said the landlady's grandson who was sitting on an old sofa at the back of the room, "and that's lodges. We've

got the Masons, and the Odd Fellows, and Rebeccas, and Eastern Star, and Degree of Honor and Knights of Pythias, and Woodmen of the World, and two or three others. The people are kind o' lodge crazy, and some belong to all the different lodges. We did have a grange, but the granges around here have all busted up."

It was nearly nine o'clock, and the various members of the hotel gathering each took a candle and made their way upstairs to bed.

Out at the rear of the hotel a bell was suspended on a pole, and I was awakened by its rude jangling the next morning at a quarter to six. Fifteen minutes later it again rang to make certain that everyone in the hotel and in the village should know that breakfast was ready. When I went downstairs I met the landlady coming from the barn where she had just finished milking. The village was astir, and the smoke was rising lazily from home chimneys, and there were occasional passers clumping along on the board walks. The cows and horses were being turned loose to graze on the village streets and out into the surrounding forest.

By eight o'clock the schoolboys began to gather at the battered two-story schoolhouse, which was on the borders of the central village cluster. Apparently they wanted plenty of time to play baseball; for after a little loitering about the front steps, they resorted to a near

common and a game was started. It was a large school, and rustic youths were plentiful, and the game was quite spirited. Nearly every boy wore overalls, and some came from home without their coats, and some were barefoot. I judged that as the season advanced they gradually shed their garments until they only retained the overalls and a shirt. A number of youths were reduced to those necessities already. The orthodox head-covering was a straw hat with a broad brim that was rakishly turned up behind and down in front.

When school-time approached, girls became as abundant as the boys, but their attire was neat and pretty and was not at all suggestive of the barn and the fields as was that of the boys. It was a pleasure to see a village so teeming with children, and all of them so hardy and genuinely rural.

In the hamlet itself the men folks were now resorting to the post-office, and presently the stage came in. Then they got their mail and after more or less visiting dispersed, and the village settled down to its usual sleepy quiet. I went back into the country to have a look at the happy valley where all the land was superlatively fertile and all the buildings substantial and all the farmers rich. It was an attractive region, but after having heard it described so enthusiastically it hardly came up to my expectations.

What interested me most in my ramble was a man I encountered by the roadside splitting out "shakes." The material he used consisted of sections of straight-grained fir about thirty inches long. These had been roughly split out of a large tree into squarish blocks six or seven inches through. He would set one up on end and with his frow and maul ream out the thin boards quite deftly and rapidly. These home-made shakes were a very common roofing on the farm buildings, especially the barns and sheds. Pine was the most desirable material, but not a great deal grew here, and the man had resorted to fir. The chief trouble with the latter was that in nailing it to the roof it had a tendency to check, and a good many pieces had to be thrown away on this account.

The man was elderly, and he had come to the region when it was new, over half a century ago. We got to talking, and pretty soon I sat down on his pile of shakes. Then he took out his pipe and after filling and lighting it seated himself on a log. "It was in 1853," said he, "that I first saw this country. We'd come out here hunting for Oregon—that is, hunting for Oregon farm-lands that were as good as we'd heard tell of. We were six months getting to the coast region from our old home. Now, you can step on a railway train and get here in less than six days. Look at the progress of the world, will you? I gosh! if a man had advocated



Schoolboys



building a railroad across them plains in those days they'd 'a' hung him. They wouldn't 'a' believed it could be did.

"We had flint-lock guns. Then the cap-lock was invented, and the brich-loader; and it wa'n't long before a man wouldn't pick up a muzzle-loader if he saw one lying in the road. Muzzle-loaders shot good, but they were too slow. One man with a brich-loader was equal to twenty-five with the old-fashioned sorts.

"This country was all wilderness and Indians. The mountains was wooded, but the valleys was prairie. There was some large timber in the valleys, but no underbrush, and the land was covered with bunch grass that growed thick and tall and was the finest feed possible. You could turn out your horses in the fall and they'd find plenty to eat and would keep fat as hogs all winter. Oh, Lord, yes! But as time went on this country got to be heavily sheeped, and the sheep e't off and tramped down the bunch grass till it was run out. The grass that's took its place is pretty poor. In the summer, which is when we have our rainless season, things dry up and you got to feed your cattle and keep on feedin' 'em straight through the fall and winter. If we have right early rains in the fall the grass may turn green a little, but it don't make growth to amount to anything.

"You see lots o' young trees growin' everywhere the plough ain't gone, and what I said about there bein' so much prairie land don't seem likely, does it? Well, I'll tell yer—it's a thing I kind o' hate to mention because I'm afraid people'll think I'm a liar—the reason of there bein' grass instead of underbrush and thick forest was that the Indians set fires to keep the land clear and make good range for their ponies, and easy hunting.

"We took up a donation claim. All we had to do was to settle on the land, and it was ours. In a few years that was done away with and they substituted the homestead claim, and you had to pay something for your ranch. We put up a log house with a stick and clay chimney at one end. The boards for the floor we reamed out of four-foot cedar, and after bein' laid we levelled them with an adz and plane. The doors had wooden hinges and latches that we made ourselves. Iron was expensive. Nails was two bits or more a pound, and we mostly got along without 'em. For the roof, to save usin' nails, we put on a pole over each course of shakes to fasten 'em in place.

"Oh, the early settlers had it pretty tough. We talked a jargon that was got up for the Indians; and that was taught in the schools. I used to could speak that jargon better than I could English and we had an *i*-dea that was goin' to be the standard language here

in Oregon. Grazing was the principal business. The man with ten acres fenced had a big place. There was plenty of wildcats and panthers, and black and brown bears, and you can find a good many still back in the mountains. Coyotes are about the worst pest now, though I can't say they're so awful bad. They kill sheep and ketch turkeys and chickens and anything like that.

"We used to raise better wheat then than we can at present; but we didn't have any of our modern machinery for handling it. We tramped the grain out with horses or cattle. We'd clear up a circle on the ground about thirty feet across, and some people would build a platform. Then around the outer part we'd lay a ring of sheaves with the butts inward. There were several ways to do the thrashing. Perhaps the commonest was for a feller to get on a saddle horse and lead another and go round and round over the grain. I've rode a horse like that a many a day thrashing. Sometimes a yoke of cattle would be driven around instead of horses. Often a post was set up in the middle of the circle with a long arm to it, and the horses hitched to the end of that and set to goin.' From time to time we'd stop to turn the sheaves or to throw out the straw, rake the grain into a heap in the center of the circle and put down more sheaves to tramp.

242 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"Now I've got to git to work, and I want twenty dollars from you. The information I've given is worth that, ain't it?"

NOTE.—To see the Oregon farm country, probably one could not do better than to explore the Willamette Valley south of Portland. From the agricultural point of view this is a very attractive region and you will find much to please you in soil, crops, climate and people.



A hollow among the hills

XII

ALONG THE COLUMBIA

THE Columbia is one of the biggest of American rivers, and in time of flood it has a flow greater than is ever attained by either the St. Lawrence or the Mississippi. Its lower course, especially, is broad and impressive, and a great highway for commerce and travel. At the mouth, the river is two miles across. Here, a short distance back from the sea, John Jacob Astor in 1811 established a trading post. He selected a spot where the south shore dipped inward a little and a cove gave slight shelter. This did very well as a site for a village cluster, but for a large town like the present Astoria it has disadvantages. The shores nearly everywhere rise from the water's edge in a steep hillside, and the place clings along this declivity for several miles. It is very odd—the way the buildings lift one above the other, and you are surprised by the sharp rise of the streets and by the numerous stairways that give approach to the upper tiers of homes. The climbing is evidently not relished, for the buildings are snugged in a very close but attenuated mass on the

244 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

lower verge of the slope while the upper portion is a background of ragged forest. Probably more than half the town is not on the land at all but is on the wharves or stilted up at the waterside with the waves lapping about underneath at high tide. The principal business thoroughfare is a wharf street. This is largely a result of the fact that the ships formerly furnished nearly all the custom, and the trader who was right on the wharves had the most advantageous position. The whole water front is a curious labyrinth of these wharves, and they jut far out into the water, with a zig-zagging of streets and numerous footways, and the railroad cutting across them all. Here are enormous sawmills with their great piles of lumber, the warehouses of the river steamers and of the ocean-going ships, and the wide-spreading fish canneries.

Here too were the fish wharves with hundreds of the staunch rowboats alongside used in the salmon fishing, and as the boats rocked on the waves the pulleys that were a part of the tackle by which they were hitched kept up a weird and incessant creaking. Some of the boats had gasoline power, but in most I saw a mast lying along the gunwale, and as soon as the craft started for work and got into open water the mast was set in place and the sail spread to the breeze. Now and then a boat would begin to drop the net over the stern within a few hundred feet of the wharves.



Mending a salmon net

Others went out to the middle of the river or to the opposite shore, or down where the stream meets the ocean. Each boat carries two men—a “captain” and an “oar-puller.” They let the net drift with the tide. When they at length take it into the boat they may have only one or two fish, or they may have dozens. In a catch of twenty-five fish there will be those that weigh anywhere from fifteen to sixty pounds, and there is a possibility of getting a giant of the race that will run up to over eighty pounds.

Boats are coming and going all the time, but most of them start out at low tide, toward evening, and do not return till morning. In the quiet weather of summer they often delay the start for home until the land breeze springs up, and then come flitting in, half a thousand or more, all together. After a boat has delivered its fish to the cannery or cold storage it returns to its hitching-place by the wharf, and the wet net piled at the stern is pulled out and hung on rails that are set on the wharf for this purpose. Later the net is carefully looked over and the breaks repaired. Sometimes it has caught on a snag and been torn so badly that it is a several days’ task to put it in shape. The nets are both wide and long, and cost three or four hundred dollars. A boat costs about half as much more. Profits are divided, two thirds going to the captain and one third to the oar-puller. A captain who uses good

246 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

judgment and works hard may be fortunate enough to clear during the season close to two thousand dollars. But the average is much less, and some poor stupid fellows barely pay expenses.

The open season is from April fifteenth to August fifteenth. There is no forecasting when the fish will run in multitudes. One man may come home and go to bed having caught nothing. Another may come in an hour later who has drawn up his net so full that he cannot get all the fish into his boat and has to throw many away. Often, the bulk of the catch is made within a fortnight, but again the haul of fish may be distributed somewhat unevenly through the entire four months. A man is supposed to make all he needs in the season to carry him through the year, and some are content to loaf and do odd jobs during the time that intervenes between seasons. Others find steady work. There was a time when the fishermen were largely Americans and English, but now they are nearly all Finns or natives of Eastern and Southern Europe, who speak our language brokenly or not at all.

Get away from the town inland and you find almost unbroken forest. In a few favored spots a little farm-land has been cleared. A considerable quantity of potatoes is raised, and the Chinese have plots where they grow most of what the town needs in the way of green vegetables. You see these slant-eyed gentry

peddling their products through the streets, carrying their wares in two plethoric baskets suspended from the ends of a bamboo pole which is balanced on the shoulder.

In the woods are to be found raspberries, blackberries and huckleberries in abundance, while strawberries flourish in the open country. But for the most part these small wild-fruits go unpicked, though in quality they are far finer than those grown in the tepid climate of California. The people continue to depend on the south for fruits because nobody cares to be troubled with anything that brings such small returns as berry-picking. There is practically no poverty, and therefore no spur to make small savings. If any families are poor it is because of drink. Astoria's main street had fourteen saloons in a third of a mile, and all the towns and villages in the valley seemed to be over-supplied with drinking-places in a somewhat similar manner. Apparently, everyone resorted to them—fishermen and lumbermen, merchants and farmers, and while I did not often see men wholly incapacitated because of their potations, there were plenty who got to the border line. Nor did this seem to be counted a serious failing, but, rather, the natural thing for any man to occasionally drink to excess. As a visitor from Iowa expressed himself to me on the subject, "My sakes! it's awful, ain't it!"

250 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

the fishing is almost continuous. The fishermen are supposed to set free any Chinook that gets into their nets out of season, but I am afraid they seldom do. They dispose of such fish less openly, but rarely are willing to sacrifice the immediate personal gain to the future common good. If left entirely to their own devices the fishermen would in a few seasons exterminate the salmon and put an end to the very industry by which they make their living. A few years ago it seemed likely this would happen, but of late the propagation of the fish has received attention, and many millions of spawn have been put in the waters. As a result the number of fish has apparently been largely increased. How much it is not easy to say, for the people interested in the industry prefer there should be an impression of a short catch in order to bolster prices, and the real quantity in pounds secured is very likely a fourth greater than the published figures.

At the time of my visit the river water was brown with mud. This just suited the fishermen, for the fish are then less able to see and avoid the nets. Later in the season a good deal of fishing would be done with long seines fastened at one end to the shore on a gently shelving beach. The other end is carried out on a flat-boat in a long loop down stream, brought to the land and pulled in by horses. Many fish are also caught in traps. A trap consists of a line of poles

A salmon wheel



driven into the river bottom near shore with wire netting fastened to them. The fish come to the wire and feel their way along until they are in a kind of pocket at the end whence they are not able to find their way out. Down at the bottom of the pocket is a net, and when this is raised, up come the fish, and the fisherman reaches in and takes them out.

Most of the river hamlets are rude and small, and with the dark fir woods closely environing them they seemed lonely and much cut off from the world. But sources of pleasure are by no means entirely lacking. At one place where I stopped they were to have a dance that evening including a midnight supper at a dollar a ticket. The clouds began to threaten in the afternoon, and the young folks were a good deal concerned lest it should rain and hurt the success of their entertainment. The girl who waited on the table at the one village restaurant was especially anxious. Those on whom she waited were mostly fishermen and railroad workers in overalls and shirt sleeves. They talked dance and they talked fish, and they chaffed the girl. She talked back and added liveliness to the occasion by snatching back the dishes just as she was about to deliver them into the hands of the eaters, or she would give a slap to the paper one fellow was reading every time she passed. The room was rough in its appointments, and the food as a whole was not very satisfying,

252 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

but the boiled salmon was delicious and the quantity served most generous.

Across the way from the restaurant was a grocery store; and the sign painted on the three panes of glass that formed the diminutive show window read thus: | DAN | FOW | LER |. This had a short-syllabled suggestion that the proprietor was Chinese. Near by was another business which had a similar sign, only this sign ran across two windows with a substantial separation between as follows: | SAL | | OON |. Judging from English associations with the names, Dan Fow Ler was a man, and Sal Oon a woman. On the whole, I concluded some sign painter with a relish for a joke had been travelling on the coast. I saw other signs of the sort and recall one in particular covering the front of a building but with a window in the middle of it so that the letters were grouped like

this: LOD  GING.

From the village where I had stopped on the Columbia I rambled back up a hollow past several homes with garden patches and a few fruit trees and small fields about them. In the near woodland the dogwood bushes were full of their white wings, and the roadside was aglow with dandelions. But when I went on I did not have to go far into the forest before I found that a fire had run through it, and few trees had survived.

Some still stood, bare and dead, and many had fallen making the earth a chaos of their shattered and blackened trunks. For several miles I plodded on and everywhere saw naught but the charred and melancholy woodland ruins. It looked as if the region could never again know the beautiful, tall green forest that had formerly grown here. Some of the wilderness fires run over vast areas and even destroy homes and lives, but most of the woodland is now owned by the lumber companies, and they take many precautions to prevent or fight fires that used to be neglected. The law compels the burning of the winter slashings, and this has to be done early while the ground is still moist so that the fires will not run through the woods. The entire Columbia Valley was dim and blue and often the opposite shore faded into ghostly vagueness by reason of the smoke from the slashings.

To see the river at its best one should make the journey from Portland to the Dalles, a distance of nearly one hundred miles. The railroad is close to the shore much of the way and the views from the car window are quite entrancing, but it is only from the river steamers that one gets the full beauty of the scenes. As you go up the river the valley is at first broad and pastoral, a succession of billowy hills with their farmlands and forest, their scattered homes and grazing lands. Gradually the hills lift into wooded bluffs, and you at times

find rocky precipices rising from the water's edge, or lonely pinnacles like monster monuments. The stream resembles the most romantic portions of the Hudson in its scenery, but it is an untamed river of the wilderness with a vigor and a charm all its own. Willows and cottonwoods fringe the shores, but the crags and slopes are almost solidly clothed with evergreens.

At intervals some little village found a clinging place in a dell among the rocks, and these forest hamlets looked very attractive and Swiss-like in their mountain environment. Perhaps the most pleasing of them is Cascade Locks at a spot where the river breaks into a foaming tumult of rapids and the shores rise in great rocky ranges on either side. The homes hide among the trees, and the land is a medley of steep hills and irregular hollows. Everyone apparently built as fancy dictated, and the houses were most picturesquely scattered, some on the bluffs overlooking the river, some on the little heights farther back, some in the green dells with perhaps a mountain rivulet, crystal clear, tumbling along through the dooryard. If you followed the narrow roads and paths that linked the houses together you were always twisting and turning, climbing or descending, but the sudden surprises of the views were ample payment for the exertion.

Wherever there was a rift in the trees in the direction of the stream, you saw its foaming waters and the big



Woodland blossoms

stony terraces of the mountains beyond, while in the other direction the shattered cliffs towered into the sky, calm and majestic guardians of the vale. Formerly, according to an Indian legend, the river here was spanned by a mighty natural bridge, beneath which the water flowed smoothly in an unbroken channel, and the red men were accustomed to cross the bridge in their travels and local intercourse. At one time there lived on the Oregon side an Indian brave whom the gods regarded with much favor. While hunting on the Washington side he met and fell in love with an Indian maiden of a neighboring tribe. Presently he married her and they started together for his home. But when about to cross the bridge, disappointed suitors and others of the maiden's tribe leaped out from an ambush. The two hastened on across the bridge, and no sooner had they reached the Oregon side than they heard a tremendous crash, and looking around they saw that the great bridge had fallen carrying the wrathful pursuers to their death. Thus the gods showed their love for the young brave. The fall of the bridge formed the rapids which have obstructed the white man's navigation.

The village came into being as a portage place; for steamers could not get over the rapids, and their cargoes had to be transferred a half mile across a neck of land. Now the government has built locks, and the steamers

pass on. These locks have cost three or four million dollars, probably twice what a private concern would have paid for the same work. The investment is entirely out of proportion to any present business done through the locks. The cost of maintenance is considerable and the daily passage of four of the flat-bottomed river steamers constitutes practically all the traffic. As one man said to me, "The business won't pay for the axle-grease used."

In earlier days the local fishing was an important industry, but salmon are not as plentiful here as they were. Below the locks are numerous fish-wheels along the shores. They are a striking feature of the landscape, for they are from twenty to forty feet in diameter and six or eight feet across. Each pair of spokes is fitted with a great wire-meshed scoop. The wheel is adjusted in a substantial framework, and the current revolves it and keeps the scoops lifting from the water. A stout lattice dam reaches out from the wheel with a sharp slant down stream, and there is a boom moored above to protect the whole structure from drift rubbish. The dam guides the fish to the wheel, and the first thing they know they are hoisted in the air, fall into an inclined trough at the hub, from which they flop down at one side onto a platform, or into an inclosure of water where the fishermen can get them at their convenience.

It is customary to string the fish on wires and attach them to a half-barrel which acts as a buoy and drop them into the stream. Arrangements have been made with a cannery down the river, where a man is on the watch for them, and when a buoy comes in sight he goes out in a launch and gets the fish. Sometimes as many as a ton are attached to a single half-barrel.

The chief resort for persons of leisure in the village was the porch of a tiny butcher's shop. Thence you could look down from the hillock where the shop stood and see two or three other small places of business, a hotel and the station. This was the heart of the hamlet, but there was seldom enough transpiring to rouse the loiterers from their dreamy lethargy. Occasionally there were attempts at joviality, but the sluggish social current was only slightly stirred thereby. One man tried his wit several times on a gnarled old citizen with a brush of gray whiskers under his chin who was absorbed in a newspaper. But the latter would only glance reluctantly over his spectacles, make a short response and return to his reading. Finally the joker said, "Did you know I was a Norwegian?"

The reader looked up and a smile overspread his somber features. "Wal," he replied, "I guess ye are a good deal north of wegian."

The joker saw that he had been worsted at his own game, and he walked away. Shortly afterward we had

. "A man usually rolls up in his blankets on the hay in the barn. At the sawmills here the employers furnish a tent, or shack, and boards to build a bunk and some hay to put in the bottom of the bunk, and then the worker fixes up to suit himself. Yes, it's only hoboies who travel without blankets. When you see a man knockin' around this country empty-handed and lookin' for work, you can be dead sure he's prayin' to God never to find it."

At the village hotel, among a few other transients was a watch-peddler. He was eighty-six years old, bowed and gray, but still brisk and hearty. He had a neat little grip packed with the watches and with a variety of chains, fobs and jewelry, and he not only sold from this stock, but did repairing. He mentioned one family in the place to which he had sold eleven watches, "and good ones, too." His sales to that particular family would have been fewer had it not been that its head was a logging laborer on the river, and occasionally lost a watch in the water. The peddler had been in the country for many years, and he had observed much and intelligently. I was interested in his views of the difference between life in New England and in the Far West.

"I remember very well my father's house back in Vermont," said he one evening as we were sitting together in the hotel office. "It was big and substantial



In a village on the Columbia

and we had a nice garden and raised all sorts of things for our own eating. My father, as affairs went then and in that region, was a rich man. He owned a good farm and had four or five thousand dollars in the bank. Everybody called him Uncle Joe, and if anyone needed to borrow they'd come to him. They didn't borrow very heavy. A hundred dollars was a big pile for a man to go in debt them days—that's what it was! My father wa'n't an eddicated man. It was my mother learned him to write after they was married. He used to do most of his figgering with a piece of charcoal on a board.

"When I first came out here I took up a claim, and I had a neighbor on one side of me that was nicknamed 'Gassy' Smith because he talked so much, and on the other side lived a man called 'Hog' Jones who was so stingy he wa'n't fit to live. Hog was well off, but he was like this—if you was to buy a bushel of wheat of him that was worth seventy-five cents he'd make you pay two dollars for it if he possibly could. Most of the people around were Southern, and they were copperheads of the worst kind, while I was a republican. They didn't like me a little bit, and even threatened to shoot me, but I tried to treat 'em right and did 'em any favors I could, and they got over that.

"My son has a farm out here now. His house looks as if it had stood where it is for seventeen hundred

years, but I don't suppose it has for fifty. It's the darndest old shack you ever saw, but that don't seem to trouble him any. He's got the Western habit of not payin' much attention to the home surroundings. The country here is developing all the time, but the houses is dreadful little improved over what they were twenty years ago. I've stayed at houses so poorly built and neglected the sand blowed in the cracks across the floor. You rarely find a good henhouse, or stable, or barn, or a woodshed properly filled. Usually the wood is just a pile in the yard exposed to the weather, and there's not much cut up ahead. They haul it a load at a time, and I've seen 'em do the splitting by leaning the sticks against the wagon tongue. Often, in order to handle a fallen tree and make it into cord wood lengths, they bore two holes with a long augur into the center of the tree at different angles so they'll meet. This they do at each place where they want to cut it off, then drop a live coal into one of each pair of augur holes and the coals burn through the log and reduce it roughly into sections that can be handled. The method is wasteful, but it saves the trouble of sawing.

"Our farms have great natural resources, and it seems curious the people should be too lazy to raise vegetables and the like o' that; and yet they are. Oh, my, I should say so! The ranches all have smoke-

houses and their meat food is mostly pork, but in the villages beef is common, only the beef is apt to be this dry, tough Coast sort. It ain't like the juicy tender beef you get in the East. Not much corn is grown here to fatten the creatures with, and in most parts they have to do a lot of tramping over the range to get enough to eat. Exercise and poor feed makes the meat tough and the cattle small and lean. You let a man from here see the way cattle are given corn in the East—all they will eat—and his eyes would fall right out of his head with surprise.

"I've stopped at ranches to get dinner where they wouldn't furnish me anything but bread and milk, and darn poor bread at that. Even then they wa'n't hardly satisfied with twenty-five cents to pay for it. Good Lord! I've been to places where they had any amount o' cows and yet not a mite of butter. Most men get to own their places clear, but they seldom have money laid by. However, there are some men who in the larger enterprises of the region make their fortunes. I know one fellow who came into this village with fifty dollars in his pocket and he became a partner in the sawmill. A few years later he sold out his interest for sixty thousand dollars. He was a smart, sharp, devilish good man, I tell yer. When he got his cash he left. He didn't build here or spend any of his money here."

264 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

"No," said a young fellow who with a companion was playing cards at a neighboring table, "of course he didn't. A man with wealth has no business living in a hole like this. What enjoyment is there here for him? He goes, and he goes quick, you betcher!"

No doubt the confines of life in the river village were narrow, but I could not feel that it was so blank as this young man claimed. Certainly nature had done much for the place, and the wild charm of mountains and forest and stream surrounding could not easily be surpassed.

NOTE.—By all means visit Astoria, and see the lower river and its wilderness hamlets and its fishermen and woodsmen. Astoria itself is remarkably picturesque, and is especially interesting when the salmon fishing is in progress. The portion of the river that is most romantic and imposing in its setting of cliffs and mountains is the hundred miles above Portland. This should be seen from the deck of a river steamer. If possible, make a stay at some of the little villages along shore. They are all charming, but I am inclined to think Cascade Locks is more so than any of the others. Its surroundings with the big mountains and the noisy tumult of the river, and its nestling seclusion on the wooded irregularities of the banks will never be forgotten by those who pay it a visit.

XIII

ON THE SHORES OF PUGET SOUND

THE place where I stopped longest in the Puget Sound country was a scattered settlement of five thousand people which was old as age goes in the Northwest. Its most commanding height was crowned with a big school-building, and there were little church spires sticking up all about. "We're supplied with pretty near every creed and denomination you can think of," declared one citizen proudly.

As I was rambling through the town on my first evening there a church bell that I judged from the sound was one size larger than a hand bell, began to ding-dong not far away. I was on the same street as the church and presently came to the edifice. Several boys were climbing up to look in the windows and then jumping down. "I see him!" they cried excitedly. "I see the crazy man!"

The bell now ceased its clamor, and I concluded to attend service. I entered and found a Young People's Meeting in progress. Outside I could hear the boys scuffling at the windows. After a while a man in the

266 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

audience rose and left the room. He was shabbily dressed, his hair was tousled, his looks vacant and his step shuffling. He was the crazy man. Nearly all in the room turned to watch him go, and among the children there was much snickering which was long in subsiding.

After the meeting came to an end there was a second meeting in a larger room across the hall for the entire congregation. The gathering was small, but the service had considerable vim in it. The singing, with the cabinet organ to lead, was particularly energetic, though the hard metallic tones of the voices savored of the uncultured wilderness. The region is still raw and youthful, and delicacy of feeling and expression will come later. The regular preacher was away, and a member of the congregation who had a knack for speaking took his place. He looked like a reformed bartender—stout figured, with a narrow forehead, a heavy mustache and a hoarse, loud voice. When he rose to begin his sermon he said, “There was an old farmer went to town to buy a clock, and the storekeeper showed him one, and says, ‘Here’s a clock that will run eight days without winding.’”

“‘Gracious!’ says the farmer, ‘and if she will run eight days without winding how long will she run if you wind her?’

“Now, I ain’t been wound up for eight days myself, so there’s no knowing how long I’d run if I had been



Mending a shoe

wound up. I'm goin' to talk to you tonight about the Bible. The Bible ain't just one book. It's many books put together. How many books are there in the Bible?"

He paused, tipped his head on one side and raised his eyebrows inquiringly. There was a blank silence. "Don't all speak at once," he cautioned jokingly.

"Sixty-six," responded a faint voice in the audience.

"Yes," said the preacher, "and sixty-six books is a good big library; but if you was to go and collect all the books that have been written about the Bible or been inspired by it you would have thousands—ain't that right?"

"The Bible wa'n't given to the world all complete. It was given gradually—first a little for Adam, then more for Abraham and his family, and later still more for the Jewish people. But finally it was all given and was for the whole world. The climax of God's work was to send Christ down here on the earth, and Christ came to save the people of his day, and he came to save you and I. This was a savage old world then. You take the thumb-screw and the stretchers and gulletin and the gladiator which was all a-flourishin'—it was time for judgment, and the Christian religion was necessary."

At the close of the service the fact that I was a stranger led a number to shake hands and introduce themselves and say a friendly word. This reception

268 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

was very pleasant, but the greetings were coupled with some extras I did not so much appreciate. One asked me if I was a Christian, another if I was a Baptist the same as they were, and they all wanted to know if I was going to settle there, and one tried his best to direct me to the office of a relative who was a real estate agent.

Along the borders of the town ran a swift, deep river, and on its banks were sawmills and shingle mills. All through the day the air was shrilled with the sound of the demoniac saws and the panting of engines. Every mill had its great piles of sawed lumber about and its heap of burning waste constantly crackling and sending up a cloud of smoke. The region contains the finest and largest body of timber in existence, but it is fast going. "When I come here four years ago," said one man, "nearly all the roads leading out of town was hardly wider than the wheel tracks and was closed in on both sides by heavy forest. You couldn't hardly see daylight, but gee whiz! it's a fright the way the forest has been cleared up, and now those same roads are lined with farms. In a few years more there'll be none of the best forest left."

One afternoon I went back into the woodland to see some of it that had been untouched. I followed a logging railroad, starting at a spot four miles out of town where they dumped the logs from the cars into the river. I was soon in genuine Puget Sound forest

where except for the railroad the woodsmen had as yet done no work. This particular section had been neglected because the trees were mostly hemlocks, timber which is comparatively valueless. But they were wonderful trees, straight as arrows, clean-stemmed, crowded, and astounding in their towering height. The fires had never run through them, and for once I saw woodland as nature intended it should be. No matter how fierce the winds might be that swept the tree tops they could not ruffle the forest depths. Here eternal quiet reigned. Here was always coolness and moisture and twilight, even at midday. Here grew the green mosses and tangled shrubbery, and great ferns of almost tropical luxuriance. Here lay the trees that had died and fallen, but which by reason of size and the dampness were many, many years in crumbling into mould. So encumbered was the ground with the rough, rank mass of decay and so thick was the under-growth that one would find the task of pushing a way through well nigh impossible.

The wilderness was sober and almost silent. Sometimes a bird sang, sometimes a squirrel chattered. In one glade a dogwood had opened some scattered blossoms, and I saw occasional wake-robin—wild lilies, they were called locally, and a few skunk cabbage plants, each thrusting up a great yellow flower from amid the green leaves.

Presently I came to a chopper's camp in a clearing. How sorry it did look!—a group of board shanties amid a stark, staring desolation of brush and a few standing dead trees, while back behind was nature's green forest temple. Yet though nature had been ages in upbuilding, man would soon bring the slender pillars and graceful arches tumbling to earth, and their like would be seen no more in that place forever. I kept on, following the railroad in its sinuous way through the forest. Now, the land on either side had been cut over, and it was not long before I could hear on ahead the light steady blows of axes and at frequent intervals the throbbing and hissing of some horrible steam monster. This monster proved to be a donkey engine hauling logs to the loading place. It was firmly fastened to several standing trees and it dragged the logs by means of a stout wire cable. What a snorting, thunderous creature it was, and how startling the sudden screeches of its whistle. The very trees might well have fallen in terror at the racket it made. The energy it displayed was astonishing as it brought the great logs crashing through the woods over the hillocks and through the hollows, scraping off the bark and smearing them all over with mud. Once on the landing platform the log was released and by means of another cable the engine rolled it on to one of the waiting cars.



Starting to fell a giant cedar

A little farther up in the woods the men were felling trees. Two worked together. The trees grow very large at the base, and for the first ten feet taper rapidly. To save time they are cut well up above where the great sinews reach out to grip the earth. Six feet is perhaps a usual height, but I saw old stumps on the lowlands of twice that altitude. The cedar stumps continue sound indefinitely, and many years perhaps after the choppers have done their work and the fires have burned the brush, these stumps are cut into fifty-two inch lengths and split up into shingle bolts that look like short heavy pieces of cord wood. "But it ain't first-class material," explained one man. "The grain is any way and every way, and there's a good deal of complaint about the shingles we're turning out."

When preparing to fell a tree each of the two choppers makes a notch on opposite sides of the trunk about three feet from the ground and inserts a short board that has on the end a sharp upturned edge of iron. The iron catches, and the board projects horizontally. On these supports the choppers stand, and they perhaps will cut other notches and insert boards and go up a stage or two higher. The task of severing the trunk is begun by making an undercut which will bring the tree down in a particular direction, and then they finish from the other side with a long saw.

272 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

The trees sometimes have a diameter of a dozen feet. The cedars, in particular, reach a vast girth, and in the valley by the roadside was one with a circumference at the ground of sixty-three feet, and near by was another that had a gothic arch cut through it affording easy passage for a person on horseback. But the tallest trees are the firs. Two hundred feet is a very moderate height and some shoot up to above three hundred. The fall of one of the monsters, when the woodsmen have cut through its base, is something appalling. As the tree begins to give, the sawyers hustle down from their perch and seek a safe distance. Then they look upward along the giant column and listen. "She's workin' all the time," says one.

"Yes," agrees the other, "you can hear her talkin';" and he gives a loud cry of "Timber!" to warn any fellow-laborers who may be in the neighborhood.

The creaking and snapping increase, and the tree swings slowly at first, but soon with tremendous rapidity and crashes down through the forest to the earth. There is a flying of bark and broken branches, and the air is filled with slow-settling dust. The men climb on the prostrate giant and walk along the broad pathway of the trunk to see how it lies. What pygmies they seem amid the mighty trees around! The ancient and lofty forest could well look down on them and despise their short-lived insignificance; yet their per-

sistence and ingenuity are irresistible, and the woodland is doomed.

To the rear of those who do the felling are the buckers. They work singly and cut off the limbs and saw the trunks into lengths. They climb about in a chaos of wreckage, sometimes well up in the air, sometimes down on the ground out of sight. "When I hailed from the East out here," said one worker, "and they put me to bucking, I thought that was a pretty lonesome job. It didn't seem like a hull lot o' fun for one man to start with a long wiggling saw cutting off a log seven or eight feet through. But that's all right now I've got used to it."

Perhaps the best paid wilderness worker is the hook tender who attaches the donkey engine cable to the logs. His is a dangerous task and he is paid four dollars or more a day. The head fallers get three and a half, the second fallers three and a quarter, and the swampers who delve about clearing a path for the railroad receive two and a half. Every man comes to camp with his own blankets, and he pays five dollars a week for board. "There's quite a rakeoff in that," one man in the valley, who had himself been a chopper, explained to me; "but they have the best of food and a first-class cook. It would do your heart good to eat with 'em. I've stopped at many a hotel, but never had food served yet that would come up to what they

have in the logging camps. The lumbermen won't stay no time at all unless they are well fed."

The buildings at the camp I visited in the woods had roofs and sides of a single thickness of unplanned boards. In the men's home quarters were bunks in a double tier along the walls—mere boxes with a continuous seat down below along the front. Each man fixed up some shelves to suit himself around the inside of the bunk for containing his belongings, and on the floor underneath were thrown the surplus boots and other articles not especially valued. Every projection and cross piece was hung full of duds. In the middle of the room stood a stout stove and a long table. This building was home to the men the year through, for they continue cutting in winter and summer alike.

Their chief recreation is to go to town on Saturday nights. As the man I have already quoted explained, "They've got money, and they just blow it in. That there is the logger style of it. If they saved instead of spending they'd all be rich. There's no places of amusement in the town. They can go to the library and sit down or go to a hotel and sit down, but that don't suit 'em. No, they either get drunk or go to church. Some take in both. I've seen 'em at church pretty well loaded.

"Now, I want to tell you, my friend, they wear good clothes when they go to town. Say! you'd take 'em

more for clerks and professional men than loggers.. Of course some don't give a cent how they dress, but that's not usual.

"Saturday nights 'bout 'leven or twelve o'clock you hear 'em returnin' along the road. Mostly they hire a rig and ride to the camp, eight or ten fellers to a team. Oh, they're sporty! There's nothing too good for the logger. Take 'em as a whole they're the best class of men I ever run up against. They're all nationalities, some Americans, some Canadians and a good many Scandinavians. Yes, they're pretty darn well mixed. The loggers are generous and always take up a collection if someone is hurt in the woods. That don't happen often considerin' the danger, but when a man does get it he gets it proper."

The region I was visiting was in many respects ideal farming country with its rich soil, near markets and facilities for transportation. The crops of potatoes and other vegetables and cereals are wonderful, and great quantities are produced of strawberries, raspberries and blackberries of the finest quality. However, as one local dweller said, "You can't get anywhere but that there's something wrong with the country, I don't care where it is. It's damp here, and that's bad for the rheumatism; but the main thing I don't like is that the land sells for more than it's worth. Cleared farm land within three or four miles of the town goes

276 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

at from a hundred to two hundred dollars an acre, and that's too much."

I noticed in a circular sent out to advertise the region it was stated specifically that they have no mosquitoes and no thunderstorms. Like most circulars for Eastern readers sent from the Pacific Coast this describes a paradise which does not exist. They have both mosquitoes and thunderstorms in the Puget Sound country, though in most seasons and in most sections these are quite mild. "But the thunderstorms we had last summer," said one informant, "was heavy and no mistake. They seemed to skip us right here though, and the ground got awful dry. I'd see a storm comin' up black as tar, and it would make me boiling mad to watch it swing off over the hills where it wa'n't needed and leave us as dry as ever."

Land that I called cleared seemed almost non-existent. By keeping a sharp lookout I did now and then observe a clean field, but nearly all the farms were very much encumbered with stumps and brush. There are stumps even when the land is cultivated, black and massive, dotting the fields like gravestone memorials to the dead forest. Often stumps were standing in the dooryards close about the homes, some of them nearly as tall as the buildings. "I tell you what I seen," a native remarked to me. "In my pasture there's a hollow stump so big that sometimes five or six cattle

In the garden



will get into it as a sort of shelter. By gol! that sounds like a fish story, but it ain't.

"There's so many stumps and snags and such a lot of brush in this country I sometimes think God Almighty never intended it to be cleared at all. In starting the work the first thing is the brush-cutting—slashing, we call it. The brush is left piled up in windrows, and when it's dry you burn it; but it don't burn clean and the fire leaves a lot of stub ends besides all the charred logs and other large pieces, so you are in a nice job. You can be just as black as you want to be in the picking up."

The stumps are the most serious part of the problem. The effort to obliterate a really big one by burning and hacking and digging may continue for years. To put a charge of powder or dynamite underneath is the quickest way. That breaks it up and loosens it. Then, by hitching horses on to the fragments, the great root fangs can be jerked forth from the ground, but there will still be an enormous hole to fill. The entire expense of clearing the land of both brush and stumps will average about seventy-five dollars an acre.

I asked a man in the town if the farmers were prosperous. "Sure thing!" he replied. "They're well fixed, and lots of 'em have money in the bank."

But those black spectral stumps lingered in my mind, and I could not dispel the feeling that the farmers were

278 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

wrestling with the wilderness, and that their prosperity was of the future rather than of the present. Besides, their buildings were small and often poor, and I said so to the town man.

"Well," he responded, "in the East when a man has made money, the first thing he does is to improve his surroundings so he can take some pride in 'em; but here they don't seem to care much about that. They're content to live in shacks, and there ain't much to their barns except a roof which is just good enough to turn water off."

One day I was caught by a light shower, and stopped at a wayside home. A woman and some ragged children came to the door and I was ushered into the best room. It was a battered, barren apartment with board walls and ceiling. The most notable articles of furniture were a stove, a sewing machine, and a sofa with an old quilt on it. The walls were adorned with three enlarged portraits staring out of heavy, dingy frames.

The woman exhumed some photographs for my entertainment, wiping them one by one with her apron as she passed them to me. They were much the worse for wear. "This one is of a logging crew," she explained; "and this here is of the last graduating class from the high school; and that there is of two of my

nieces in Seattle. I been washing today," she added with a sigh, "and I'm completely done out."

The shower was soon over. In a near field the man of the house was zigzagging around among the black stumps with a pair of old horses ploughing. He did not stop for the rain. When I started on I went through the field and spoke with him. He seemed to be in no hurry and he let his horses stand while he went and sat down on a pile of rubbish that he had cleared off the land and thrown in a great windrow to serve as a fence. Then he got out his jackknife and began whittling.

"I landed here twenty years ago," said he, "and I swore I wouldn't stay if they was to give me the hull country, but now I'm content with a very little of it, and there never was better land anywhere than this right here. It can't be discounted. The region was at first all covered with heavy woods. The river and the cricks was the thoroughfares, and there was swarms of Indians camped up and down 'em. Timber wa'n't worth what it is at present, and there's been more spoilt here than a little. We'd pick out the finest trees, cut 'em down, take the best part of each log and leave the rest. We didn't use to look at hemlock at all.

"The cutting-off of the country has made quite a difference in the weather. We've had a terrible fine winter and spring so far this year. But we used to

280 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

have mist day after day. We called it Oregon mist—missed Oregon and hit here. It was thick enough to cut into chunks; yet you might be out in it all day and hardly get wet through. My gracious! the mist was so bad in July and August it was almost impossible to cure our hay. Late years, instead of mist we have rain, and then it comes off clear.

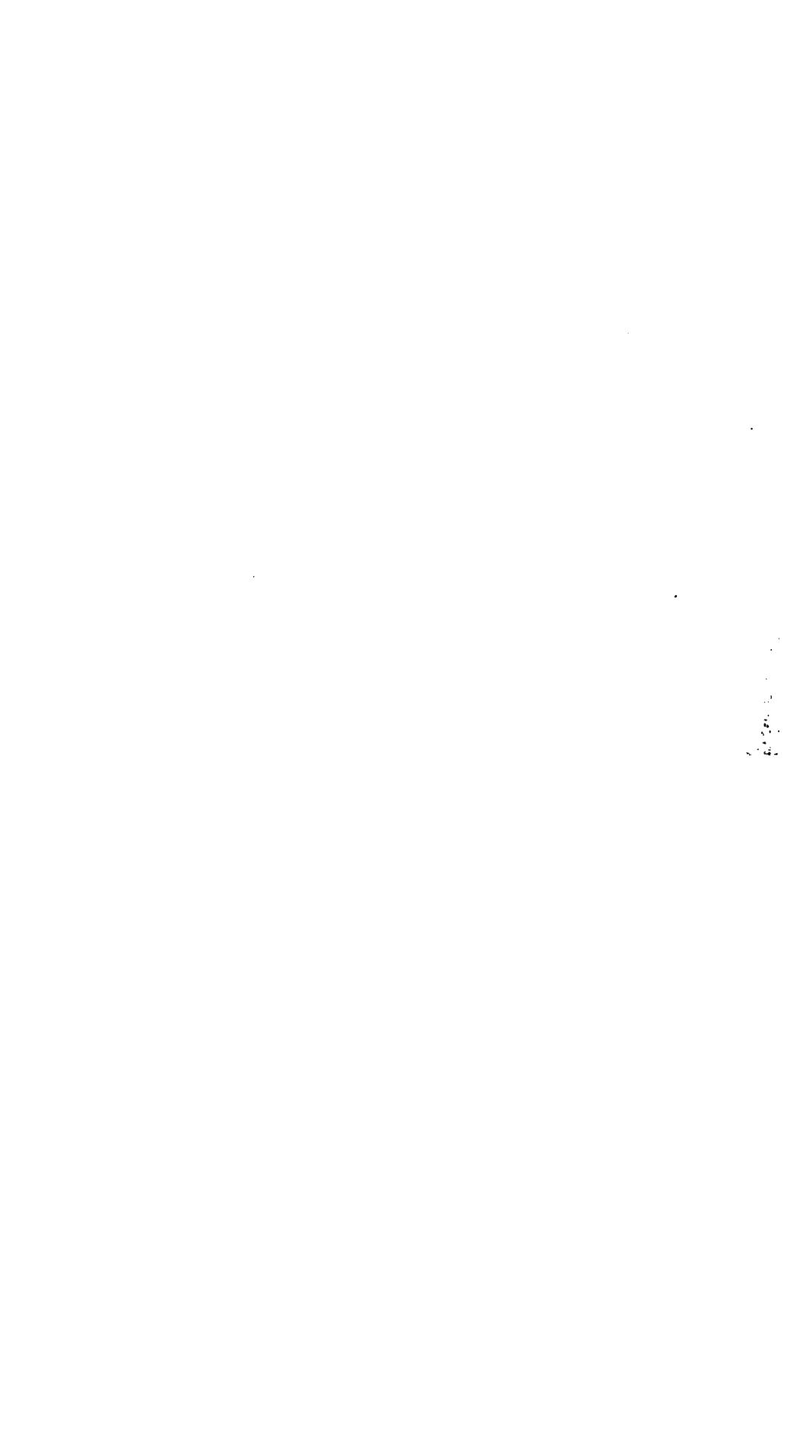
"This is a great country for fish. Heavens and earth! when I come here we didn't think much of salmon—they was too common. We appreciate them now. At this season they are a little scarce and you have to pay as much for 'em in our town as in any old place; but, later, in the salmon run you can buy a ten or twelve pounder for fifteen cents.

"There's one thing I'm glad of—they say we ain't in the earthquake zone, and yet I'm not sure about that. Back here in the woods is a bluff that's full of petrified clams and other things which was once in the sea. How did that bluff get where it is unless it was hove there sometime? Earthquake zone be darned! You can't tell me we ain't in it when I've seen them petrified clams in that high bluff.

"I've got some first-class land, but I could show you other land in this region that's as poor as this is good. I've had a chance to sample some of it myself. Once I bought thirty-five acres on the upland, and I had a blamed nice little farmhouse there and as fine a well



Burning brush



of water as ever was outdoors. In the spring I started my crops, and everything looked as green and nice as it does here, but there was hardpan close below the surface, and in June my crops just pinched right off and died. The next winter a man come along and looked at the place thinkin' of buyin'. We agreed on the price, and I was all in a tremble till I got the money for fear he'd back out. He gave me eight hundred and fifty dollars and I bought down here. I can raise more on one acre of this land than he can on his hull place.

"A good deal of the high ground is all right, and to hear the land agents talk you might think it was as good as this in the valley. You don't get a fair idea from them. It takes this bottom land nearly all the time to do what they say land up there will do. My farm here gets along pretty well without fertilizer year after year, by rotating. On high ground, though, you're obliged to enrich the soil if you want decent crops.

"Not long ago a party of homeseekers come to our town from Minnesota, and they was met at the station by a lot of land-sharks who showed 'em around. On the borders of the town I noticed one of the sharks pointing out a farm field and sayin' to a visitor, 'Why, man alive! if you was to pay five hundred dollars an acre for that you'd double your money in two years.'

"'What'd I raise?' says the homeseeker.

"'You could do it with potatoes,' says the shark.
'Our land'll produce twenty tons to the acre.'

"Well, it wa'n't my business to chip in, but I couldn't help remarkin', 'Say, I can't hit that. If you've got any such land to sell I'd like to buy it.'

"Hops have been a great crop here, but raisin' 'em is just like gambling. The price goes up and down so uncertain that perhaps they'll make you rich, and perhaps they'll make you poor. There's one valley I know of went into hops, and all but two men in that valley have lost their ranches. It was the same way with tobacco when I lived back in Wisconsin. At first we made big money and thought we'd discovered a gold mine. Everybody went into it heavy, and pretty soon the price dropped way down out of sight. It was a pity, by gracious! You had the tobacco on your hands, and you couldn't eat the stuff. All you could do was to chew it and spit it out, or smoke it; and my old dad was put right to the wall.

"But then there's things right here that don't turn out any better. Two years ago I tried the poultry racket. I thought I'd go into the business in a large way and make some money. So I bought an incubator and paid seventy-two dollars for it and set four hundred eggs. I got twenty-five chickens. Then I tried another four hundred eggs and got thirty chickens. That was enough for me and I put the incubator away. My

hens do good work hatching, but in a few days after a hen brings off a brood, the weasels, skunks and rats get busy and you won't find a confounded thing around the place only dead chickens.

"I was some afraid when I settled here that the river would carry off all my land. The banks used to wash badly, but since the trees have been cut off the channel ain't changed so much. You see a tall tree partly undermined by water would get weaving in the wind and loosen up a lot of soil that would wash away in no time then. You notice how high up off the ground my house is perched. That's on account of floods. One November the water covered the second doorstep, but the flood is a great help to us fellers. It fertilizes the land. I thought it would ruin my potatoes that November. I had 'em all in a pit with a tent-shaped roof over 'em banked up with turf. When the flood was at its highest the top of the pit stuck out of the water like a muskrat's house. I spoke to the neighbors, and they said, 'The water'll seep right off. Leave your potatoes alone. Don't monkey with 'em, and they'll be all right.' Well, it didn't hurt 'em a dog-gone bit, and I never lost a potato except some in the ground that wa'n't dug. Those was just as mushy as if they'd been frozen.

"In 1896 we had what we called the big he freshet. That there surpassed anything the old-timers had ever

284 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

seen, and on the low grounds steamers ran all around out over the fences and rescued the people. It wa'n't very nice to be tangled up with a flood like that. A good many buildings was carried down the stream and it got away with a terrible lot of stock. I've seen a pig floating along on a log in that flood just as calm and nice as if he'd been a frog, and it was a comical sight. There's a queer animal—Mr. Piggy. You take one that's in danger of drowning into a canoe, and it'll lay just as quiet as can be. But as soon as you are near enough to the shore so it thinks it can spring to land, then look out for yourself. They say a pig don't know anything, but they wouldn't say so if they'd come as near getting a ducking as I have in the way I speak of."

Every dweller who had been for any length of time in the region had a similar fund of picturesque impressions and experiences. There were clouds mingled with the sunshine; yet I think no one who visits the Puget Sound country can fail to believe that there is before it a great future. The Sound itself makes a waterway marvelous in extent and navigable for the largest ships. The climate is peculiarly attractive. It does not entirely lack vigor, yet the cold is never extreme, and there is plentiful moisture. The streams flow throughout the year, and the supply of water for drinking is abundant and pure. Many great towns are growing up along the shore and they have back of

them much land of wonderful fertility. Already a network of steam and electric roads have been built that reminds one of the populous sections of the East. As one man remarked, "You can start from here and go anywhere in the world—in any direction, and by land or water."

NOTE.—The Puget Sound country appeals to the traveller with exceptional force. The Sound itself is a magnificent waterway with its shore line of eighteen hundred miles; and the larger bordering towns are remarkably vigorous and modern and promising, while the tributary streams and fertile soil and fine forests prophesy a future of unusual prosperity and the maintenance of a very large population. You will stop at Tacoma and Seattle, as a matter of course, but it would be well also to have a look at some of the smaller places. Then, too, if possible, visit the primeval woodland and see what is probably the noblest forest on the face of the earth.

XIV

AT THE EDGE OF CANADA

THE village where I stopped was smack up against the Canadian line. It had been recommended to me as "quite a busy little burg," but I could not see that it was very different from other small sawmill towns I had observed as I looked out of the car window going north. There was the same cluster of wooden stores, saloons, churches, lodging houses and hotels, and a dribble of residences for a mile round about. The house that reached a full magnificence of two stories was a rarity. Most people were content with one story, and the house was small at that. Newness and rawness were very apparent, and there was a good deal of the makeshift about the dwellings. All the home premises were snuggly fenced, and the cows and horses were turned loose to browse in the public ways and along the railroad tracks and out into the surrounding wilds to suit themselves.

A large sawmill had burned the year before and had not been replaced. Many workers had therefore moved away, and certain saloons and lodging houses

had closed their doors as a consequence. These buildings now were little short of ruinous, with shattered windows and other marks of neglect and misuse that gave the place a touch of melancholy and decay. On my first day, as I sat in the hotel office, I made inquiry about conditions, and one man turned to another and said, "Well, Bill, the town's havin' a little bit of a boom now, ain't it?"

"Yes," replied Bill, "it booms nights. I've heard it, but I don't see much difference daytime."

"Why is it that your vacant buildings look so shaky?" I asked. "They can't be old."

"I suppose," responded Bill, "it's because it ain't the habit of the country to build substantial. Even a nice appearin' building is apt to be cheap and thin walled. The paint is about all there is to it."

By the office were two a couple of Germans. They just then started discussing a village runaway, and the older man said: "Dort war zwei horses und a heavy wagon. Von irgendeiner ritten off and der driver he gone down in it. Zwei zu lange rotted. Der made der horses run away fer good, and der wagon pole hit a telegraph pole and broke. Two old peoples was standin' on der sidewalk here."

"Was der driver?" asked the younger.

"Yes," replied the older, "der driver was a

nothings. Der woman vas hit in der head. Der horse kind o' pawed like and hit her mit his front foot."

"Vas she knocked down?" inquired the younger German.

"Oh, sure," was the reply, "she vas knocked down all right."

"Dat vas ven der horse put his foot on her, don't it?" said the younger of the two.

"No," his companion answered, "if he put his foot on her den it fix her for goot. She ish all better now."

The surrounding region was a wide plain varying little in level for miles, but it had a fine setting of rugged hills and lofty wooded ridges in the distance, and when the weather was clear I saw peaks that were white with snow. The lowlands were pretty thoroughly cleared of valuable timber, yet I was assured that a little farther back there was no end of heavy woodland, and that the forest had as yet hardly been touched. The forest that was in view would have been much finer had it not been for the yearly ravaging of the fires.

"We had one big fire this last March," a man explained to me. "That's an unusual time for a fire. We commonly get 'em in summer, but this winter was very dry. A feller was burning up some brush and the fire got away. There was a gale blowing, and it carried the flames through the tree tops. The wind would catch burning moss and pieces of old dead bark from





Getting ready to plant potatoes

the tall trees and take them a long distance and keep the fire spreading. I and two other fellers and a horse got cut off by the fire from the logging camp where we was workin' and we had to go roundabout in a hurry or get burned. The horse was no help and we concluded to leave it, but the horse follered us. It pushed along through the brush close behind and when we climbed over a log it would rear up and jump and we all reached camp safe.

"Down at the next village they wet gunny sacks and put 'em on the roofs to prevent the houses from bein' set on fire by the flyin' sparks. One man lost his house and barn and all his cows and was pretty near burned himself. Oh, gosh, yes, it was raging! At night, looking from here toward the mountains, you could see the big blaze away up in the air. Yet it done a whole lot of good in places, clearing the land, and there was plenty of people who was glad to see the fire running over the woods because it would make fine pasture."

During my stay I rambled about the region pretty thoroughly, though the walking was far from ideal. However, in the opinion of the natives they are blessed with excellent roads. I thought them wretched. Deep ruts and sudden hollows and mud holes abounded, and there were spots where broken stone had been dumped on. This stone prevented teams from sinking down

290 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

out of sight, yet shook you up till your teeth rattled if you were in a vehicle. Then, too, there was a good deal of corduroy so that the traveller on wheels got bumps and jarrings of every variety.

On one of my walks I overtook two school children, a boy and a girl, and we kept on in company for a mile or more. The girl's name was "Addie," the boy's name, "Fred," and they were near neighbors. Each carried a dinner pail, for they lived too far from the village to allow them to go home at noon. The boy was barefoot and his legs were well daubed with clay mud as the result of wading in roadside pools.

"We've got two tame pigeons in our barn," remarked the boy. "Mr. Frye give 'em to us. Oh, Addie, did you see that peach tree of ours this morning?"

"Eh-uh," she replied, by which she meant, "No."

"Well, you ought to stop and look at that tree. She'll have peaches on this year. She's just full of blossoms."

"We've got a big red cow," said Addie, turning to me; "and that cow'll let you pet her. When she's lying down you can get on her back and have a ride. I like my old red cow, and her milk is nearly all butter. We have another cow named Maud, and her milk don't have any cream at all. Maud won't let you pet her either, and if you do she will run and beller."

"I picked a whole bunch of shootin' stars, yesterday," said Fred, "and I brung 'em home and put 'em in water. They looked pretty and I'd have taken 'em to school only I forgot. When I was little I picked a lot of skunk cabbage blossoms, but they smelt awful. They stinked and I threw them away. I don't never pick them any more."

"Once I fell in the crick near our house," Addie affirmed, "and my brother pulled me out. I didn't get whipped. My mother only scolded me."

While the children were telling me the story of their lives after this fashion a family of small pigs came scampering along the road toward us with a dog barking at their heels. My companions hastened to share in the excitement, and they seemed not to care much whether they chased the pigs or the dog. But they soon rejoined me, and the boy said, "We had some little pigs in a pen last year, and I got in there and was running 'em and one bit my finger."

"I don't see but that there is as much going on here as where I live," I observed.

"Where do you live?" they asked.

"In Massachusetts," I replied. "Do you know where that is?"

"Eh-uh," Addie responded, "but I know where Seattle is and where Portland is."

"And I know where Massachusetts is," declared the boy. "It's across the ocean."

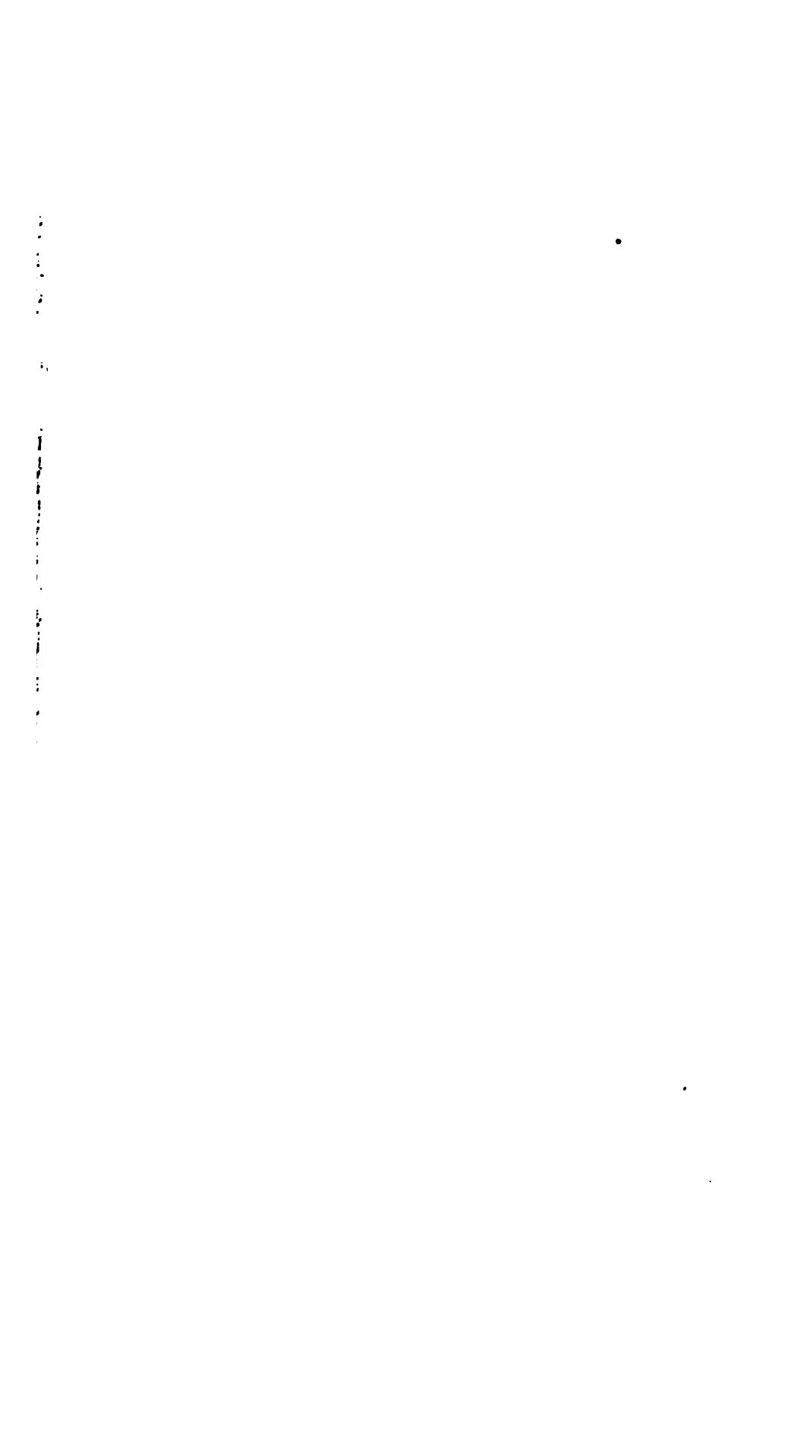
"What ocean?" I inquired, but I had reached the limit of his information.

The children's homes were out among the blackened stumps and the ragged woodland as yet uncleared of brush. The dwellings were small, paintless, and rude in their surroundings and all their appointments. Yet the everyday work and play, the farm animals, and the changing seasons held plenty of charm for the children and they were content. Their elders possibly saw a darker and duller side. However, they were spurred on by their hopes for the future. They were constantly winning in their fight with the wilderness, clearing up and improving the land, setting out fruit trees, increasing the number of their domestic animals so that the time seemed coming when they would be assured of a good and valuable farm and a comfortable income. As for present discomforts, I doubt if these occasioned any special chafing, for these were part and parcel of the prevailing way of living in the region.

It was interesting to watch a man ploughing new ground and see how irregularly he had to dodge about to avoid stumps and snags, and how constantly the horses were jerked to a standstill by some obstruction the plough had encountered. "Yes," said a resident, a former dweller in Tennessee, whom I accosted at



Visiting at the gate



this task, "thar's a right smart of green roots in hyar, and a heap of fern roots, too."

His small boy was busy pulling out such roots as the plough loosened and piling them up to burn, and in a few days they would have a crop of oats started.

In a neighboring field a man with the help of his wife was gathering up fragments of stumps on a wooden sledge and making great bonfires of them. "This is spare time work," said he. "I've got some good cows and a cream separator, and we're makin' butter enough to supply us with the money to pay our living expenses. So when there's no hurry about the other things we clear up the land and we are makin' what will one of these days be a ranch we can sell for a high price. In the rough you can buy this land cheap, and by clearing it gradually at odd times your labor don't mean any real outlay."

I was about to resume my walk, but the man said his wife was just starting to the house to get dinner ready and invited me to stay and eat with them. He was insistent, and I accepted the friendly hospitality. When we left the field he drove his horse to the barn—a good-sized spreading structure, yet without a sawed stick in it. The entire material had been split out of cedar—the beams and studding, the rafters and shingles and the boards. Some of these boards were eight or ten feet long, and their even thickness and the neatness of the

294 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

whole job were surprising. The barn was nearly empty except for a little wild hay from the marshes and a few bags of apples. The fruit had lain there on the floor all winter, and it was still sound and eatable, though a trifle withered.

"When I was new here," said the man, "I thought a building like this was the dog-gonest thing I'd ever seen in my life. It was quite a cur'osity, by George! But such buildings are common all around, and there's a good many split-out houses, too. Say, it's astonishing, ain't it, the lumber and boards that can be made without a saw ever touching 'em? The road from here to town, four miles, used to be pretty near all of corduroy split out of cedar. They've turnpiked the road lately and covered most of the cedar out of sight, but there's still left a corduroy bridge one hundred feet long over a low wet place.

"Cedar is useful in a good many ways. It makes the best fence rails in the world—you bet your life it does. It just naturally won't rot out, and the rails are so light you can throw them all around. Give me cedar rather than firwood fencing every time. A firwood rail that's let lie on the ground—he'll go—won't last over night hardly. Do you-all use any of our Washington cedar shingles in the East? If you get our number ones you won't do any kicking."



A corduroy bridge

The farmer's dwelling was a little brown house in a large yard that was nearly filled with apple trees just coming into bloom. At the back door was a pump, but we washed for dinner in a corner of the kitchen where there was an oilcloth covered stand with an earthen jar of water on it and a tin cup to serve for a dipper. The children came from school, the baby woke up and we all sat down to eat. The repast was plentiful and good, with pork and potatoes as the mainstays. After we finished, the man and I sat talking while the wife cleared the table. Their oldest son was a school teacher. "He's been in four different places," said the man, "and every time he's had a regular tough school to handle. Children go to school all the way from seven to twenty-one years of age, and there's often some pretty wild kids among 'em. Sometimes they whip the teacher, and sometimes they lock him outside. Yes, they'll plague a teacher to death, and the school gets played out. At my son's school, though, there's very little trouble. He has a knack at managing. This winter I believe one big boy undertook to whip him, but my son, in spite of being small, is active, and he just collared the lad and flopped him on the floor flat on his back. Since then things have been all right.

"Last year we had trouble in this little school in our own destrict. The children got to having a big time and had like to have tore the schoolhouse to pieces.

296 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

They done just as they pleased, and the teacher, she'd sit down and cry. She was a nice girl, but she was just that tender-hearted she couldn't use any force to compel a kid to behave himself. She was easy in a good many ways. The ringing of the first bell she was supposed to do at half past eight, but she'd ring it according to the time she happened to get through breakfast at the place where she boarded—maybe one morning at eight and perhaps next day at nine. We have three school directors in each destrict, but one of 'em was away, and the other two couldn't agree what to do. You see one of these two was an old bach', and I think he had a notion to try to marry the girl. So he wouldn't hear of her bein' turned off. But finally she resigned.

"Of course the boys were a good deal to blame. They done a little too much, but they wa'n't really bad, because this new teacher who's come in has no trouble at all. We have a nine months' school beginning about the first of September, and it keeps continuous except for a week at Christmas and another week at Easter. We pay fifty dollars a month. Usually the teacher takes care of the schoolhouse, but once in a while we get hold of one who won't build the fires. Then we hire a janitor, but that's a thing we don't do unless we have to."

"Do the people in this neighborhood go to church in the town?" I inquired.

"They ain't great hands to go to church anywhere," he replied; "but once in a while we have meetings in the schoolhouse. There's an Advent Church in the town, and whenever the preacher gets short of money he comes out here and holds services for a few Sunday afternoons. On the Saturday before he starts in he'll drive around from house to house to announce that there'll be a meetin'. He's about two-thirds or three-fourths crazy in my opinion. He ain't married, and you can take any man, I don't care who he is, and let him live for years all by himself out in this wilderness, and he will get a little off. Under them circumstances a man is sure to have very peculiar streaks and imagine things ought to go a certain way. Yes, and a man bacin' here in the woods is pretty likely not to be able to get along a minute with his neighbors. Well, speakin' about our meetin's, at the end of 'em there's a canvas made of the homes and we fix the preacher up with both money and food supplies.

"That reminds me the pigs are squealing for their dinner, and I must go and feed them."

The rancher went off toward the pigpen and I betook myself to the highway. Along either side of the road was an unending series of shallow, slimy pools alive with wriggling tadpoles, and these pools or the warm

neighboring banks were a resort of numerous "streaked" snakes, as they are called in Oregon, but which we in the East speak of as "striped." The snakes slipped away at my approach into the weeds and brush, darting out their forked tongues warningly.

As I walked on I observed occasional log houses, survivals of the rude days of the first settlers. They were low and small and looked like poor quarters, but there was one that seemed to me quite delightful. The roof made a wide projection at one end over the gable and door below, and relieved the architectural bareness. Vines had been trained to grow up to the eaves, and a patch of berry bushes close by made the cabin nestle in its surroundings very prettily. A path led away to a smokehouse a stone's throw from the dwelling, and this smokehouse was made of a large hollow log set on end with a roof put on the top and a door at the side. A steep wooded cliff rose a few rods distant and made the scene both wild and picturesque.

The woman of the house said the family had come from Chicago. "We didn't think to live in a place like this," she explained, "and when the children would look from the car windows as we were coming and see little log cabins of this sort they would cry out, 'What's that—a chicken coop?'"

While we were talking, a little girl appeared from around the corner of the house. She had been after

A log house



some strayed calves and now had got them together in an adjoining lane. "I saw a Chinee rooster in the woods," said she.

By that I understood she had seen a male Chinese pheasant. These birds have been introduced comparatively recently, but are becoming numerous and are a valuable addition to the wild game. I often heard their sharp double squawk in my rambles. The little girl affirmed that they were, "awful nice eatin'."

I was late in returning to the town. The sun had set and the frogs were croaking in lively chorus in the village puddles. Some of the young men were out in the grass of the broad main street pitching horseshoe quoits. I could hear the call of children at play on the byways; there was a soft tinkle of cow bells and the clack of footsteps on the wooden walks. Low in the west hung the slender golden scimiter of the new moon, and in the east, above the dark nearer ranges, rose a lonely mountain peak, pure and white and beautiful against the dusky sky.

NOTE.—Any hamlet like this, recently carved out of the wilderness, has a peculiar fascination, and such are numerous in the far Northwest. The traveller with a liking for what is simple and rustic cannot do better than to pick out one at random and stay at least a day or two. Life there is more comprehensible than in a big town; individuality is more marked in its dwellers, and you come in contact with real life in a way that entertains and instructs.

XV

THE NIAGARA OF THE WEST

THE Shoshone Falls on the Snake River in Southern Idaho ranks among the most imposing falls in the world; yet it has received from the tourists thus far scant attention. Very little exact information as to its character is to be had, and I found the railway people, both in the offices and on the trains woefully lacking in knowledge of how to get to the great waterfall. Thus it was that I stopped off from the train one night at Shoshone, supposing I was to go from there a twenty-five mile journey by stage to the Falls the next day; but I found the stage had long been discontinued and that I must travel a roundabout route by rail, a distance of one hundred miles.

I had plenty of time to look around the village the following morning before an available train came. It was a place of a thousand inhabitants, and in addition to the homes and group of stores there was a courthouse, school building, several small churches and a newspaper office. A western town has to be very diminutive indeed not to have a newspaper, and where one can

exist, a rival usually gains a foothold. Then there is a fight—an endless war of words. Even in the largest of the coast cities the papers have a curious boyish habit of pitching into each other, and they give their rivals their due with no light hand. You are surprised, on reading what is said of a competing paper, that it can continue to exist when it shows such incompetence, idiocy and general cussedness, and you are informed that its office boy is superior in sense and ability to the editor-in-chief.

The settlement was huddled very snuggly together as if in dread of the open loneliness of the surrounding prairie, but really, I suppose, to take advantage of the town water system. A creek flows through the village and makes it possible to irrigate and have green lawns and flourishing gardens.

Round about was the prairie clad with gray sagebrush that seemed to extend to the ends of the earth. Intermingled with the sage were scattered tufts of bunch grass and low weeds and blossoms, but these growths fell far short of covering the nakedness of the ground, and the region looked the more somber because it had been overflowed with lava in the recent past, and rough fragments and shatterings were everywhere. It appeared as if it never had of any use to mankind;] nibbling on the bar.

pick up a living, and I was told that many large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep grazed over the plains, and that in places along the stream were expanses of soil where flourishing fruit ranches had been established. The ranchers came from long distances to trade at the town, and they and the county business made the settlement.

The town was engirdled with rubbish, and it was clear that whoever wanted to dispose of old tin cans, worn-out household utensils and garbage simply conveyed the waste material to the outskirts and dumped it. In this forlorn outlying section was the cemetery. It was right on the open prairie and looked as if it had been forgotten. Two or three graves were marked by marble slabs, but the rest were either unmarked or had wooden head pieces on which the lettering was fast being effaced by the weather. A few of the graves were inclosed by broken fences of palings or wire, and some had lava blocks heaped up around them. While I was poking about here I disturbed a Jack rabbit. As soon as he saw me he laid back his long ears and was off through the sagebrush like a streak.

My train came presently and I went on to Minidoka and then took a branch road to Twin Falls City. This branch road had been called into existence within a year by the irrigating of the tract of country through which it ran. Naturally, the region was a sagebrush



Planting time



plain rising and falling in long swells and broken here and there with ragged gullies. But an irrigation company was now ready to furnish water for three hundred thousand acres, and the government was preparing to supply a flow for half as much more territory, so the entire fifty miles along the railroad had suddenly become populous; for there are always plenty of people adrift in these newer regions who are on the watch for chances to make their fortunes quickly and easily, and they rush into any district that is opened up. Some become permanent residents. Others sell out after a while and seek still newer fields of opportunity. Many settlers are from the middle West where land has become expensive, and where a man making a fresh start has usually a prolonged struggle to own a farm. If he is adventurous or unstable he turns his eyes to the undeveloped lands in remote regions which are to be had cheap and which he can make valuable by the labor of his own hands.

As a result of these tendencies I saw the cabins of the homesteaders dotting the landscape far out into the dreary desert on either side of the railroad. "When I first come here a year ago," said the brakeman on the train, "there was nothin' doin' at all, and now the country is thickly populated. No crops will go in this year on the government property, because the canals ain't finished. The people living on the land have no chance

304 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

for any income from their claims. All they can do is to make sure of 'em. You're obliged to spend part of your time on your property and put up a house and make some improvements. Usually a man's house is a one-room shack—just a little board shed as cheap as it can be made. Even then it costs seventy-five or one hundred dollars, for all the lumber has to come in by railroad and it is expensive.

"About the only work that can be done on the land is to grub up the sagebrush and build fences. Some hack at the sage by hand, but most hire a machine which claws it out at a cost of three dollars an acre. After that job is done the brush has to be piled up and burned.

"There ain't many who can afford to stay continuously on their places. They've got to go and rustle to get money to make payments, and they put in most of their time workin' on the railroad, or in some town, or on a ranch. If a man has a family he leaves them to hold down the claim. I've got a claim myself, and so have several other fellows workin' on the train.

"This country is said to assay ninety per cent. sagebrush and sand, and ten per cent. wind. You're sure to have plenty of wind on such a big open plain as this, but the soil is rich, and when we get crops growing, things will look very different. Some say the hot winds blowing from the desert will make us trouble,



and that with the fine sand they carry along they will bruise the foliage of our crops and spoil everything. The better the irrigation is, they say, the more tender the crops will grow and the worse they'll be damaged; but I'm willing to risk it.

"When I was a boy I lived in New York City. A fellow is only an atom back there. If you lose your place somebody else is all ready to step into it and then you feel as if you were out of the race forever. You're obliged to scrap like a cuss for everything you get. There's room out here," and he shrugged his shoulders expressively. "I'd rather be a big frog in a little puddle than a little frog in a big puddle. This is better'n New York any turn in the road. If you fall down there's plenty of chances to start again, and the life is not so bound by custom. Things are free and easy. It suits me, and you won't find many people who get used to the ways here who would care to go back. With industry and health and a square jaw there's no reason in God's world why a man shouldn't get along.

"But of course not everybody sees things the same as I do. My mother come out here and stayed a year and then packed up bag and baggage and hiked it back to New York. She thought this country was lonesome."

Now and then the train stopped at a little town consisting of a cluster of shops, saloons and homes, all

306 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

perfectly new and distressingly bare of vegetation. There were no embowering trees and vines and none of the repose that comes with age. Twin Falls was like the other villages, but larger and carefully laid out with broad streets, and it even had its public park. Everywhere in and around the town were the irrigation channels, some wide, some narrow, but all of them filled with a muddy flow of water, and it was this water which was to make the dead desert a land of plenty.

The town had started in the sagebrush and within about a twelve-month had grown from nothing to a place of over one thousand inhabitants. The man who had been there a full year was an old settler—a pioneer. This was to be the metropolis of the irrigated country, and it already had some substantial buildings, and the place resounded with the blows of hammers and the clink of trowels. As a whole, small structures were the predominant ones, and shanty houses, often scarcely larger than a good-sized dry-goods box, were common. Some people were dwelling in tents, or in the upper portion of a covered wagon that had been lifted off the wheels and set on the ground.

There was much coming and going of teams on the dusty highways, trade was lively in the numerous stores, and some business seemed to be doing in the two diminutive wooden banks. One corner in the heart of the town was being utilized at the time I



A Jack rabbit in sight

arrived as a horse mart. Of the creatures exhibited I observed especially a pair of large handsome horses hitched at the borders of the board walk. They were in charge of a peaked little man in shirt sleeves who hovered about proclaiming their merits, and, between whiles, expectorating tobacco juice. His favorite claim with regard to his team was: "There ain't no pimples on 'em anywhere. They're good sound horses, one of the finest driving teams in this country. It ain't often you get two such as these."

"What price do you hold 'em for?" someone asks.

"Three hundred and a quarter," is the reply. "Now ain't they the prettiest things you ever laid your eyes on? They're a well-bred team and just as kind—why! I've gone out to the barn and found my little boys on them horses' backs and wallowing all over 'em and never getting harmed a mite."

"It would cost a good deal to take care of 'em," said the prospective customer. "Feed is pretty expensive."

"They ain't heavy eaters," responded the trader. "You give 'em a little oats and hay and they'll keep fat all the time. They are good to work, or for driving either. If a man wants to go to town he can just hitch 'em up and they'll take him. They're a fine team anywhere. See how they're built. There ain't a pimple on 'em."

308 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

The Shoshone Falls was seven miles distant and I decided to walk thither. The route was not very direct, for I had to follow the right-angled roads with which the country had been laid off. An uneasy wind blew, and every now and then a rotary current would start and catch up a flurry of dust. Sometimes the dust would rise in a vague brown column hundreds of feet high, and I frequently had several of these wandering columns in sight at the same time. Far off on the horizon, dim with silvery haze, were ranges of mountains and two or three peaks white with snow. The heat shimmered over the plain, and the glare of the sun was a pain to the eyes. I was soon very thirsty and the dust and wind parched my lips, but I plodded on, for I had doubts concerning the drinking water to be supplied by the houses along the way.

The settlers were busy taming the land by tearing out and burning the sagebrush, and by ploughing, harrowing and scraping their holdings into a smooth grade for irrigating. Some of the crops were in the ground. There was new wheat pricking up out of the soil, and there was alfalfa, started the year before, now forming a dark green sod. I noticed that the houses were apt to have a heap of sagebrush near them awaiting use as fuel. "That's the only thing growing on the prairie we can burn except greasewood," one farmer said to me. "The greasewood is scarce, and

we'd rather have the sage because it has larger burns. A good deal of coal is shipped in, and we depend on that mostly in cold weather. There was a spell though last winter, when enough didn't arrive to go around, and we had to go scratching after sage. The poor families suffered some in the towns, and when things were very bad the railroad would leave a car of engine coal where people could help themselves to what they needed. A car that was out over night wouldn't have much left in it by morning. It was understood with the constable that he wasn't to watch very close and was only to arrest chronic swipers who would take the coal to saloons and sell it for booze."

From any rising bit of ground on my walk I could see to the north a dark irregular rift in the sagebrush barren, and I knew there flowed the Snake River. The rift looked ominous, yet by no means of imposing proportions, and I concluded that any falls it might contain would be a disappointment. At last I left the farmlands behind, and the road became a narrow trail winding along through a strewing of lava blocks. Then I came to the verge of the canyon, which seemed to have expanded as if by magic to a width of a half mile and which yawned over eight hundred feet in depth. Far down in the chasm was the great foaming waterfall I had come from the hot, silent, monotonous prairie wholly unprepared for so magnificent a sight as this.

310 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

thunder of waters that sounded in my ears. The gorge itself is of gloomy, volcanic rock devoid of any beauty in color, but savagely impressive by reason of its size, and also because its columnar and grottoed walls and vast terraces are suggestive of the planning and labor of some titanic architect and builder.

I wandered for a considerable distance along the verge of the monstrous gorge and gazed down on the misty fall from the scarp of many a projecting buttress, some of which dropped away almost perpendicularly to the dark stream at the bottom of the canyon. When I at length took advantage of a ravine to descend to lower levels I found the setting of the falls became increasingly attractive; for now the rock walls and black crags towered far above and made a most inspiring spectacle. The river itself is a stream that at the falls flows a full thousand feet wide. Immediately above the leap are rapids and lesser falls, while big boulders and various islets block the way and add to the wild beauty. The vertical final drop is about one hundred and eighty feet, and as you watch the great white tumult of waters going down into the void of foam and flying spray below, you cannot help thinking of Niagara. The latter is not so high, but it is much broader and carries far more water. However, the Shoshone Falls exhibits about as much width and power as the mind can comprehend, and its environment

appeals to one far more than does the commonplace level from which the greater falls makes its descent. The on-looker feels satisfied that here is one of the noblest sights on this continent.

Clinging to the wild cliffs in the lower portions of the gorge grew a fringe of gray-trunked gnarled cedars. I saw a pair of robins flitting among them, and there were swallows winging in swift flight through the air, and high above the walls of the gorge the buzzards soared. During the previous winter the ground had been pretty continuously covered with snow, and there had been much suffering among the cattle on the range. Many had died and some had fallen over the cliffs of the canyon. So the buzzards hovered about the vicinity in force, for food was plenty. A little up stream from the falls, on the tip of an island crag an eagle had built its nest, though the casual observer would not have thought the rude heap of sticks was anything more than the broken tangle of a dead cedar.

Somewhat farther up the river in the quiet water beyond the rapids was a clumsy flat-bottomed ferry-boat. As I watched it ply back and forth I could not help wondering what would happen if the wire broke. A year or two ago the present ferryman's predecessor, after imbibing too freely of whiskey, went over the falls in his rowboat, and his body was found in the river below, several days later. One

foolhardy adventurer leaped from the crest of the falls. He was an Indian half-breed, and when a comrade dared him to make the jump, down he went. However, he escaped with only a few bruises, and was at once famous. Some showman arranged with him to repeat the exploit; but while making a tour with his protégé in preparation for the event the half-breed robbed his manager and was lodged in jail.

On a plateau, close by the falls, stands a rusty old hotel. There I lodged, and from its piazza at eventide I looked out on the mists rosy with the sunset light hovering over the mighty torrent and pulsating fiercely in the wind, swaying and weaving, now filling the canyon, and again all but disappearing. The volume of water in the river would be very much greater in June, the time of flood, and the spray would then fly over the hotel like rain. On its exposed sides the house was coated with a grayish deposit left behind by the mists. This gathered on the windows in a thick film that can only be removed by the use of an acid. The hotel people did not trouble to clear the upper sashes, for that portion of the windows was supposed to be hidden by the curtains, so I could see the results of the spray very easily.

The ground quivered with the pounding of the water, and the hotel was in a tremble and the furniture shaking all night. In the morning the broad arch of a

The Niagara of the West



rainbow was painted on the mists. I was out early and crawled down a narrow gulch among the crannied rocks to the foot of the falls. This was a tooth and nail task, but the view of the roaring cataract from below was well worth the labor. The river here was in violent commotion, and the waves dashed on the rocky shore like the breakers of an angry sea. The scene no doubt is far wilder in time of flood, yet the falls must lose in beauty by reason of the vast volumes of obscuring mist. The cataract is at its worst in the late summer and early autumn, for then the stream is so low that a large portion of the precipice over which it flows is perfectly bare.

When I left the canyon I found a family of travellers camped in a hollow among the rocks a little before my road reached the level of the prairie. They had a covered wagon and a tent. The mother was inside cooking over the little stove that thrust its pipe out of the canvas roof. The father armed with a gun and accompanied by a small daughter was just returning from a walk through the sagebrush. "I never bagged a thing," he said. "I didn't even get a chance at a Jack rabbit. This country used to be full of 'em. They were thicker'n the hairs on your head, by golly! Once I stopped up here at Minidoka and went out after supper with a friend for an hour and a half and got twenty-five. We fed 'em to the dogs, but Jack rabbits

in the season make a nice stew. They do more damage than a little. They're awful on alfalfa, and they'll eat all your garden stuff if you don't fence against them. They're a great pest, too, among the trees that are set out, because they skin the bark off and the trees die.

"This morning, a little before sunrise, a coyote paid us a visit. It sat up here on the rocks howling and our dog was barking back. I opened the window and poked out my gun and blazed away at him, but he escaped."

There were two other girls in the family. They were gathering flowers. Blossoms were plenty, and the ground was fairly dappled with their delicate bloom, though they seemed out of place on that gray, stony waste. Among the children's gatherings were sweet Williams, pansies, yellow violets, sunflowers that, except in color, resembled oxeye daisies, a little white flower they called stars, a kind of vetch they spoke of as ladies' slippers, and some sprigs of larkspur.

"Don't leave that larkspur around where the horses can get it," said their father. "It's poison. Larkspur kills lots o' cattle in this country."

The man adjusted a folding chair in the shadow of the wagon and invited me to sit down. He said he and his family were all musicians, and they went from town to town giving entertainments and playing at dances. The star performer was the smallest girl, eight years old. She could play the piano and various other instru-

ments, but excelled on the violin, and he had her give me a sample of her art. She got out her violin, adjusted it under her chin and began playing, while he sat on the wagon brake and thrummed an accompaniment on his guitar. The music was very pleasing, for the child played sweetly and simply and with remarkable ease. When she finished, the middle-sized girl was sent to a brook for water, and the eldest with a halter in her hand went off to look for their horses, which, though hobbled, had strayed beyond sight, and I bade this hardy and happy family of "Versatile Musicians," as they called themselves, farewell.

In the course of time I reached the town and there I made the acquaintance of another wagon family. They were settlers just arrived and had stopped on the outskirts. The man had gone to a store to buy some supplies. A small boy and girl had unhitched the horses and were feeding them and a colt a little hay from the back end of the wagon. The woman with a baby in her arms sat on the seat. She said they had been on the road for two weeks. They slept in the wagon nights. The two older children walked a good deal, and in places the road was so bad and the jolting so severe that the mother also walked. "In the mountains there was snow," said she, "and sometimes the horses would fall down. A good many horses would kick when things was like that, but these just got up

316 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

and pulled again. We couldn't always find water. Once we had to travel thirty miles without anything for the horses to drink and they could hardly stand. I carried a little for ourselves in bottles. This country is not so nice as back East, but wages are so poor there you don't feel like stayin'."

Canvas-topped wagons were plentiful all through this newly-opened region. Some of the wagon people were chronic travellers and were not content to stay anywhere very long. Such were referred to as "floaters" or "boomers," but the majority came to settle.

My last evening in Idaho was spent at Minidoka where I had to wait till midnight for the train that was to carry me home across the continent. The village inhabitants numbered possibly two or three hundred, and there were eight saloons and a drugstore in the hamlet. These drinking-places drew their chief support from the workers on the government water ditches, and they were suggestively named "The Irrigator," "The Oasis," etc. Not long before, the village had been the residence of no less than twenty-five professional gamblers, but the sheriff had now driven them out; "and the business men here are all kicking because he done it," said my informant. "Of course the gamblers didn't produce anything, and yet they gathered in the money of the ditch-diggers and spent considerable of it

right here in town. So we ain't as well off without 'em as we were with 'em."

The saloons were brightly lighted and had plenty of customers, and the place was full of drunken staggerers. As the night wore on, the station became populous with the sodden drinkers. One of the few sober persons waiting for the train was an Illinois man who had been visiting a brother up in the Boise Valley. "The land boomers have been just a boosting things there as they have everywhere else out here," said he, "but they got a setback last summer. The ranchers have been depending on irrigation, and the water failed, and their crops were burnt out. Most men have held on to their places, but they've had to put a plaster on, and those mortgages won't be cleared off in a long time.

"I been lookin' around quite a little out here, and wherever I've been, these 'ere real estate men have tried to sell me a ranch. Oh, my soul, yes! But I told 'em there was too much wind in this country. One day a whirlwind will take your land over to your neighbors, and the next day bring it back. I like to have my land stay put.

"Another thing that handicaps the ranchers here is the smallness of the local markets. You've got to ship most everything great distances. The wholesalers and railroads make all there is to be made. Yes, the railroads do sock it to 'em for freights. My brother set

318 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

out a lot of peach and prune trees, but he can't afford to ship the fruit. It seems too bad to see those peaches big as your fist goin' to waste, and in his three acre prune orchard the prunes every year drop and lie so thick you couldn't put your finger down anywhere under the trees without touchin' some. If a neighbor wants to go and fill a sack he's welcome, but my brother never harvests none.

"Some try to make money raisin' hay. If there comes a hard winter the price is way up, but the next winter the buyer can probably get it for whistling. On the average you're obliged to stack it two or three years to sell it at a profit.

"I tell you, it don't seem to me they can enjoy livin' so much out here as we do in the East. You take this Western country and any sort of a house does for a home. Three hundred dollars or less will put up a pretty good dwelling. My brother has been livin' in such a shack for twenty years. On the ground floor are two little bedrooms and a kitchen not over fifteen feet square. A ladder in a corner of the kitchen serves as a stairway for you to climb up to a sleeping-place under the roof. He raised seven children there, but now they're growed up and moved away. The house is far from any town, and during the eight weeks I was stopping with 'em I saw just two teams pass. I used

to go out and hunt Jack rabbits. That was the only excitement I seen.

"Near where I was stayin' was a valley that had so much alkali in the soil hardly anything would grow. We went across it one day. The distance was only five miles but the weather was hot, and my brother drove like the old Harry. The horses kicked up the dust, and I was filled full. 'I golly!' I said, 'you're goin' to kill me, ain't you?'

"But he said the quicker out of it the better. I had the awfulest eyes for the next two weeks that ever was. They were bloodshot, and each morning when I got up they were gummed together, and the inside of my nose was so sore I didn't git any comfort. It beats all what that alkali will do for a feller.

"There's one advantage, though, they have over the East—they don't have potato bugs. The common run of people don't know them at all. Now and then a sack of the bugs is shipped out here, and they think the creatures are beans. A potato bug is about the stubbornest thing I ever seen. It don't try to escape, even when you knock it off in a can and put it in the fire. Any other bug that's got wings would use 'em and fly away."

The Illinois man relapsed into silence, and slouched his hat over his eyes as if he was going to try to doze. Most of the other occupants of the room sat smoking

320 Highways and Byways of the Pacific Coast

and spitting, or sleeping in dull stupor. I went out and walked back and forth in the chill night air on the long gravel platform in front of the station. A half moon was shining high in the hazy sky. The village was now dark, except for the saloons. One other person was walking as I was, back and forth with crunching footsteps on the gravel. We passed some remark presently and walked together, and my new comrade became confidential.

"I'm pretty well loaded," he said. "It's seldom I take so much; but I know what I'm about. I always keep my senses. To see me now you wouldn't suspect that as a boy back East I was well brought up. My parents were good, careful people, and they did all they could to give me an education and start me right. I suppose they were a little too strict, for when I found myself free I was like a colt let loose, and I kicked up my heels. They died just as I came of age and left me twelve thousand dollars. I was my own master then, and a mighty poor master I made."

"I had always been fond of books, and it seemed to me nothing could be so pleasant as to travel and see those famous places of which I had read. So off I started, and I visited England, France, Egypt, Palestine and other countries. I didn't spare expense. The best was none too good for me in my touring. After covering as much country as I cared to I spent several

The ferry above the falls



months in Paris, and there I got mixed up with the fast life, and my money melted away.

"I reached home finally with cash enough left to buy four six-horse teams and I went into the business of trucking. For a year I did well, and then within a few days I lost more than half my horses by pink eye. After that my luck went from bad to worse, till I gave up trying to make a place for myself in the world. I spend all I get. Perhaps I will keep straight for five or six months, and then I'll have a spree that'll leave me dead broke.

"I've done only one good thing in my life. I'll tell you about it. I had a cousin who fell in love with a locomotive engineer. Her parents didn't like that. They thought from his occupation he was kind of low and of loose morals; and besides his work kept him dirty and away from home much of the time. They wouldn't consent to her marrying him, but she did marry him just the same; and they were as loving a couple as I ever saw. They thought everything of each other, and when he got his wages he'd always bring 'em home and give the whole into her keeping. Then, if he wanted of an evening to go down town he'd say, 'May, there are one or two things I want to buy. Let me have three or four dollars.'

"She'd probably give him twice what he asked for—they were just that trustful of each other. Well,

two years passed, and he was killed in a collision, and left May with a little baby girl. May couldn't get over his loss. She tried to be brave, she tried to act cheerful; but she was thinkin' of him all the time, and when she was taken sick she didn't make a good fight against the disease and she died.

"Her folks took the baby, and yet because the child was the daughter of a man whom they didn't approve of it wasn't welcome. They didn't treat it right. They couldn't forgive May for marrying as she did. But heavens! what fault was that of the baby's? It used to make me wild, and I'd tell 'em what I thought of 'em. That didn't do any good, and at last I took the baby away from the whole bunch. Ever since, I've supported her. She's at school back East now, and she'll be sixteen next month. You ought to see her letters. She's no sponge. She never begs for money, but if there's anything she wants she'll say she'd like it if I think best, and the money to buy what she wants goes to her as fast as the mail will carry it. I've bought lots of jewelry and clothing for her, and there's few girls has more nice things than she does. She's not spoiled, either.

"About once a year I go East to visit her. She's never seen me as I am now, no, sir! I wear a good suit of clothes, and I fix up all right, and I wouldn't think of touching even a glass of beer for a week before,

lest she should smell it in my breath. When I come away I always hide a twenty dollar gold piece somewhere so she'll find it when I'm gone. Yes, taking care of that baby is the only good thing I've ever done. I'm pretty useless to anyone and everyone but her. I only wish I was what she thinks I am. Say, stranger, my life would have been a blank these last dozen years without her to work for."

It was midnight. The moon and stars looked down serenely from the vastness of the heavens and the saloons over across the tracks in the gloomy village were still brilliant and noisy. Approaching from the west I could see the headlight of my train, and off in the sagebrush, on the outskirts of the hamlet, I could hear the weird yelping of a coyote.

NOTE.—The Shoshone Falls is scarcely less worthy of the attention of the tourist than Niagara, and access to it is now reasonably easy. The river has various other attractive features both above and below the falls; and an added interest attaches to the region because a very large area of what was a sagebrush desert has recently been reclaimed by one of the biggest irrigation schemes ever attempted. Much can be seen in a single day, but a longer stay is preferable.



Companion Volumes in the Series of American Highways and Byways

BY CLIFTON JOHNSON

Highways and Byways of the Mississippi Valley

With 63 full page Illustrations by the Author
Crown 8vo. \$2.00 net. (Postage, 20 cts.)

"He knows the natures and economies of the Scandinavians of Minnesota as well as he knows the leisurely habits of the dwellers in the South, and he introduces quaint old characters, volatile, and with plenty of leisure to acquaint one with the 'Highways and Byways' of life, the life that is lived all up and down the great water-way and the land which is at once its background and its home."

—*St. Paul Dispatch*

Highways and Byways of the South

With 132 Illustrations
\$2.00 net. (Postage, 20 cts.)

"Mr. Johnson gives more illuminative descriptions of homely details in life than any other modern writer."

—*Town and Country*

New England and Its Neighbors

With over 100 Illustrations
\$2.00 net. (Postage, 20 cts.)

"A book that ranks with the best in the author's long list of entertaining and picturesque works." —*Denver Republican*

"The descriptions are admirable. The book is full of quiet humor." —*Pall Mall Gazette, London*

PUBLISHED BY

THE MACMILLAN COMP
SIXTY-FOUR AND SIXTY-SIX FIFTH AVENUE

Other Books by Clifton Johnson

Among English Hedgerows

**With an Introduction by Hamilton W. Mable and over
100 Illustrations. \$2.25**

"The book deserves to succeed, not only in America, but in the country which it so lovingly depicts."—*The Spectator*, London.

Along French Byways

Fully Illustrated. \$2.25

"Gives a singularly faithful and complete and well-balanced idea of the French peasantry and French rural life, manners, and customs."—*Boston Herald*.

The Isle of the Shamrock

Fully Illustrated. \$2.00 net; Postage, 15 cents

"A most interesting book, full of lively sketches and anecdotes."—*London Daily News*.

The Land of Heather

Fully Illustrated. \$2.00 net; postage, 15 cents

"Not only Scotchmen, but every student of human nature will be pleased with this entertaining book. It describes typical people and scenes with much sympathy and appreciation."

—*Brooklyn Standard Union*.

Old-Time Schools and School-books

With 234 Illustrations. \$2.00 net; postage, 20 cents

"A storehouse of delightfully quaint reprints of texts and cuts, and a mine of information concerning educational beginnings in this country."—*The Outlook*.

**EDITED BY CLIFTON JOHNSON FOR SCHOOL AND
HOME READING**

Don Quixote

With Illustrations by Cruikshank. 75 cts.

ALL THE ABOVE BOOKS ARE PUBLISHED BY

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
SIXTY-FOUR AND SIXTY-SIX FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK

Other Interesting Books of Travel and Description

Each in Decorated Covers, Rounded Corners, \$2.00 net.

Spanish Highways and Byways

BY KATHERINE LEE BATES

With 40 Illustrations from Original Photographs

Stage Coach and Tavern Days

BY MRS. ALICE MORSE EARLE

With over 150 Illustrations

Tarry at Home Travels

BY DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE

*With over 200 Fine Illustrations from Interesting Prints,
Photographs, etc., of his own collection*

Boston: The Place and the People

BY M. A. DE WOLFE HOWE

*With over 100 Illustrations Including many from Pen
Drawings Executed Especially for this Volume*

Philadelphia: The Place and the People

BY AGNES REPLIER

With 82 Illustrations from Drawings by Ernest C. Peixotto

New Orleans: The Place and the People

BY GRACE KING

With 83 Illustrations from Drawings by Frances E. Jones

Charleston: The Place and the People

BY MRS. ST. JULIEN RAVENEL

*Illustrated from Photographs and from Drawings by
Vernon Howe Bailey*

PUBLISHED BY

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

SIXTY-FOUR AND SIXTY-SIX FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

Mr. E. V. Lucas's Charming Books

A Wanderer in Holland

*With 20 Illustrations in Color by Herbert Marsball
and 34 Illustrations after "Dutch Old Masters"*

Cloth, \$2.00 net.

"Altogether delightful," says MR. MAURICE HEWLETT.

"The book begets an immediate desire to set out forthwith and see it all for oneself."

—*The Evening Post, New York*

"Mr. Lucas assures us that Holland is one of the most delightful countries to move about in, everything that happens in it being of interest. He fully proves his statement, and we close his book with the conviction that we shall never find there a more agreeable guide than he. For he is a man of taste and culture, who has apparently preserved all the zest of youth for things beautiful, touching, quaint or humorous—especially humorous—and his own unaffected enjoyment gives to his pages a most endearing freshness and sparkle In short, the book is a charming one."

—*New York Tribune*

A Wanderer in London

With 16 Plates in Colors and Many Other Illustrations

Cloth, \$1.75 net.

"We have met with few books of the sort so readable throughout. It is a book that may be opened at any place and read with pleasure by readers who have seen London, and those who have not will want to see it after reading the book of one who knows it so well."

—*New York Evening Sun*

PUBLISHED BY

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

SIXTY-FOUR AND SIXTY-SIX FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK

